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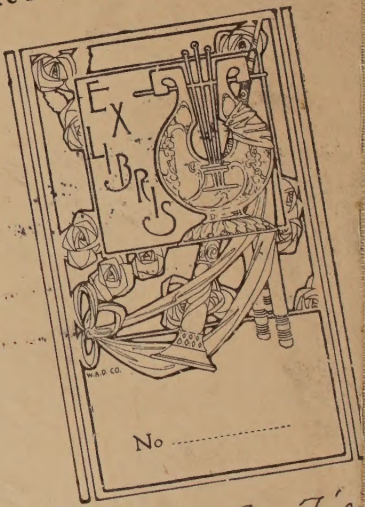

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REVP GEORGE CRABBE, L.L.D.

Published 1834 by John Murray, Albemarle Street.

LIFE AND POEMS

OF THE

REV. GEORGE CRABBE.

VOL. VIII.

...s by C. Stanfield A.A.R.A. Engraved by E. Finden.

Hampstead Heath

See Vol. I. p. 270.

LONDON.
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1834.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF THE

REV. GEORGE CRABBE

WITH

HIS LETTERS AND JOURNALS,

AND HIS LIFE,

BY HIS SON.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

VOL. VIII.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
MDCCCXXXIV.

LONDON:
Printed by A. SPOTTISWOODE,
New-Street-Square.

PR4510
.A6C7
1834
v.8 163619

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

Sir,

It is our belief that, in respectfully inscribing to you these TALES, *we select the name which, if our Father had himself superintended their publication, he would have been most ambitious to connect with them.*

We have the honour to be, Sir,

Your grateful and faithful

humble Servants,

GEORGE CRABBE.
JOHN CRABBE.

August, 1834.

On the 1st of December next will be published,

SELECT SERMONS AND ESSAYS,

FROM THE MSS.

OF THE

REV. GEORGE CRABBE,

IN TWO VOLUMES,

UNIFORM WITH HIS LIFE AND POEMS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Although, in a letter written shortly before his death, Mr. Crabbe mentioned the following pieces as fully prepared for the press; and to withhold from the Public what he had thus described, could not have been consistent with filial reverence; yet his executors must confess that, when they saw the first pages of his MS. reduced to type, they became very sensible that, had he himself lived to edit these compositions, he would have considered it necessary to bestow on them a good deal more of revision and correction, before finally submitting them to the eye of the world. They perceived that his language had not always effected the complete developement of his ideas; that images were here and there left imperfect—nay, trains of reflection rather hinted than expressed; and that, in many places, thoughts in themselves valuable could not have failed to derive much additional weight and point, from the last touches of his own pen.

Under such circumstances, it was a very great relief to their minds to learn, that several

persons of the highest eminence in literature had read these poetical Remains before any part of them was committed to the printer; and that the verdict of such judges was, on the whole, more favourable than they themselves had begun to anticipate:—that, in the opinion of those whose esteem had formed the highest honour of their father's life, his fame would not be tarnished by their compliance with the terms of his literary bequest; that, though not so uniformly polished as some of his previous performances, these Posthumous Essays would still be found to preserve, in the main, the same characteristics on which his reputation had been established; much of the same quiet humour and keen observation; the same brief and vivid description; the same unobtrusive pathos; the same prevailing reverence for moral truth, and rational religion,—and, in a word, not a few "things which the world would not willingly let die."

The following verses are therefore at length submitted to the Public; not indeed without deep anxiety, but still with some considerable hope, that they may be received with a fair portion of favour now, and allowed to descend to posterity as not, on the whole, unworthy of a place in their Author's collective works.

CONTENTS OF VOL. VIII.

POSTHUMOUS TALES.

[" *There are, in my recess at home, where they have been long undisturbed, another series of Stories,— in number and quantity sufficient for a volume; and as I suppose they are much like the former in execution, and sufficiently different in events and characters, they may hereafter, in peaceable times, be worth something to you; and the more, because I shall, whatever is mortal of me, be at rest in the chancel of Trowbridge church; for the works of authors departed are generally received with some favour, partly as they are old acquaintances, and in part because there can be no more of them.*"— Mr. Crabbe to his son George, dated Clifton, October 29. 1831.]

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POSTHUMOUS TALES.

TALE I.

SILFORD HALL; OR, THE HAPPY DAY.

TALE I.

SILFORD HALL; OR, THE HAPPY DAY.

WITHIN a village, many a mile from town,
A place of small resort and no renown;—
Save that it form'd a way, and gave a name
To SILFORD HALL, it made no claim to fame;—
It was the gain of some, the pride of all,
That travellers stopt to ask for SILFORD HALL.

Small as it was, the place could boast a School,
In which *Nathaniel Perkin* bore the rule.
Not mark'd for learning deep, or talents rare,
But for his varying tasks and ceaseless care;
Some forty boys, the sons of thrifty men,
He taught to read, and part to use the pen;
While, by more studious care, a favourite few
Increased his pride—for if the Scholar knew
Enough for praise, say what the Teacher's due?—
These to his presence, slates in hand, moved on,
And a grim smile their feats in figures won.

This Man of Letters woo'd in early life
The Vicar's maiden, whom he made his wife.
She too can read, as by her song she proves —
The song Nathaniel made about their loves:
Five rosy girls, and one fair boy, increased
The Father's care, whose labours seldom ceased.
No day of rest was his. If, now and then,
His boys for play laid by the book and pen,
For Lawyer Slow there was some deed to write,
Or some young farmer's letter to indite,
Or land to measure, or, with legal skill,
To frame some yeoman's widow's peevish will;
And on the Sabbath, — when his neighbours drest,
To hear their duties, and to take their rest —
Then, when the Vicar's periods ceased to flow,
Was heard Nathaniel, in his seat below.

Such were his labours; but the time is come
When his son *Peter* clears the hours of gloom,
And brings him aid: though yet a boy, he shares
In staid Nathaniel's multifarious cares.
A king his father, he, a prince, has rule —
The first of subjects, viceroy of the school:
But though a prince within that realm he reigns,
Hard is the part his duteous soul sustains.
He with his Father, o'er the furrow'd land,
Draws the long chain in his uneasy hand, [plann'd.
And neatly forms at home, what there they rudely
Content, for all his labour, if he gains
Some words of praise, and sixpence for his pains.
Thus many a hungry day the Boy has fared,
And would have ask'd a dinner, had he dared.

When boys are playing, he, for hours of school
Has sums to set, and copy-books to rule;
When all are met, for some sad dunce afraid,
He, by allowance, lends his timely aid—
Taught at the student's failings to connive,
Yet keep his Father's dignity alive:
For ev'n Nathaniel fears, and might offend,
If too severe, the farmer, now his friend;
Or her, that farmer's lady, who well knows
Her boy is bright, and needs nor threats nor blows.
This seem'd to Peter hard; and he was loth,
T' obey and rule, and have the cares of both—
To miss the master's dignity, and yet,
No portion of the school-boy's play to get.
To him the Fiend, as once to Launcelot, cried,
"Run from thy wrongs!"—"Run where?" his fear replied:
"Run!"—said the Tempter, "if but hard thy fare,
"Hard is it now—it *may* be mended there."

But still, though tempted, he refused to part,
And felt the Mother clinging at his heart.
Nor this alone—he, in that weight of care,
Had help, and bore it as a man should bear.
A drop of comfort in his cup was thrown;
It was his treasure, and it was his own.
His Father's shelves contained a motley store
Of letter'd wealth; and this he might explore.
A part his mother in her youth had gain'd,
A part Nathaniel from his club obtain'd,
And part—a well-worn kind—from sire to son remain'd.

He sought his Mother's hoard, and there he found
Romance in sheets, and poetry unbound;
Soft Tales of Love, which never damsel read,
But tears of pity stain'd her virgin bed.
There were Jane Shore and Rosamond the Fair,
And humbler heroines frail as these were there;
There was a tale of one forsaken Maid,
Who till her death the work of vengeance stay'd;
Her Lover, then at sea, while round him stood
A dauntless crew, the angry ghost pursued;
In a small boat, without an oar or sail,
She came to call him, nor would force avail,
Nor prayer; but, conscience-stricken, down he leapt,
And o'er his corse the closing billows slept;
All vanish'd then! but of the crew were some,
Wondering whose ghost would on the morrow come.

A learned Book was there, and in it schemes
How to cast Fortunes and interpret Dreams;
Ballads were there of Lover's bliss or bale,
The Kitchen Story, and the Nursery Tale.
His hungry mind disdain'd not humble food,
And read with relish keen of Robin Hood;
Of him, all-powerful made by magic gift,
And Giants slain—of mighty Hickerthrift;
Through Crusoe's Isle delighted had he stray'd,
Nocturnal visits had to witches paid, [afraid.
Gliding through haunted scenes, enraptured and

A loftier shelf with real books was graced,
Bound, or part bound, and ranged in comely taste;

Books of high mark, the mind's more solid food,
Which some might think the owner understood;
But Fluxions, Sections, Algebraic lore,
Our Peter left for others to explore,
And quickly turning to a favourite kind,
Found, what rejoiced him at his heart to find.

Sir Walter wrote not then, or He by whom
Such gain and glory to Sir Walter come—
That Fairy-Helper, by whose secret aid,
Such views of life are to the world convey'd—
As inspiration known in after-times,
The sole assistant in his prose or rhymes.
But there were fictions wild that please the boy,
Which men, too, read, condemn, reject, enjoy—
Arabian Nights, and Persian Tales were there,
One volume each, and both the worse for wear;
There by Quarles' Emblems, Esop's Fables stood,
The coats in tatters, and the cuts in wood.
There, too, "The English History," by the pen
Of Doctor Cooke, and other learned men,
In numbers, sixpence each; by these was seen,
And highly prized, the Monthly Magazine;—
Not such as now will men of taste engage,
But the cold gleanings of a former age,
Scraps cut from sermons, scenes removed from plays,
With heads of heroes famed in Tyburn's palmy days.

The rest we pass—though Peter pass'd them not,
But here his cares and labours all forgot:

Stain'd, torn, and blotted every noble page,
Stood the chief poets of a former age —
And of the present; not their works complete,
But in such portions as on bulks we meet,
The refuse of the shops, thrown down upon the street.
There Shakspeare, Spenser, Milton found a place,
With some a nameless, some a shameless race,
Which many a weary walker resting reads,
And, pondering o'er the short relief, proceeds,
While others lingering pay the written sum,
Half loth, but longing for delight to come.

Of the Youth's morals we would something speak;
Taught by his Mother what to shun or seek:
She show'd the heavenly way, and in his youth,
Press'd on his yielding mind the Gospel truth,
How weak is man, how much to ill inclined,
And where his help is placed, and how to find.
These words of weight sank deeply in his breast,
And awful Fear and holy Hope imprest.
He shrank from vice, and at the startling view,
As from an adder in his path, withdrew.
All else was cheerful. Peter's easy mind
To the gay scenes of village-life inclined.
The lark that soaring sings his notes of joy,
Was not more lively than th' awaken'd boy.
Yet oft with this a softening sadness dwelt,
While, feeling thus, he marvell'd why he felt.
"I am not sorry," said the Boy, "but still,
"The tear will drop — I wonder why it will!"

His books, his walks, his musing, morn and eve,
Gave such impressions as such minds receive;
And with his moral and religious views
Wove the wild fancies of an Infant-Muse,
Inspiring thoughts that he could not express,
Obscure sublime! his secret happiness.
Oft would he strive for words, and oft begin
To frame in verse the views he had within;
But ever fail'd: for how can words explain
The unform'd ideas of a teeming brain?

Such was my Hero, whom I would portray
In one exploit—the Hero of a Day.

At six miles' distance from his native town
Stood Silford Hall, a seat of much renown—
Computed miles, such weary travellers ride,
When they in chance wayfaring men confide.
Beauty and grandeur were within; around,
Lawn, wood, and water; the delicious ground
Had parks where deer disport, had fields where game abound.
Fruits of all tastes in spacious gardens grew;
And flowers of every scent and every hue,
That native in more favour'd climes arise,
Are here protected from th' inclement skies.

To this fair place, with mingled pride and shame
This lad of learning without knowledge came—
Shame for his conscious ignorance—and pride
To this fair seat in this gay style to ride.

The cause that brought him was a small account,
His father's due, and he must take the amount,
And sign a stamp'd receipt! this done, he might
Look all around him, and enjoy the sight.

So far to walk was, in his mother's view,
More than her darling Peter ought to do;
Peter indeed knew more, but he would hide
His better knowledge, for he wish'd to ride;
So had his father's nag, a beast so small,
That if he fell, he had not far to fall.

His fond and anxious mother in his best,
Her darling child for the occasion drest:
All in his coat of green she clothed her boy,
And stood admiring with a mother's joy:
Large was it made and long, as meant to do
For Sunday-service, when he older grew—
Not brought in daily use in one year's wear or two.
White was his waistcoat, and what else he wore
Had clothed the lamb or parent ewe before.
In all the mother show'd her care or skill;
A riband black she tied beneath his frill;
Gave him his stockings, white as driven snow,
And bad him heed the miry way below;
On the black varnish of the comely shoe,
Shone the large buckle of a silvery hue.
Boots he had worn, had he such things possest—
But bootless grief!—he was full proudly drest;
Full proudly look'd, and light he was of heart,
When thus for Silford Hall prepared to start.

Nathaniel's self with joy the stripling eyed,
And gave a shilling with a father's pride;
Rules of politeness too with pomp he gave,
And show'd the lad how scholars should behave.

Ere yet he left her home, the Mother told—
For she had seen—what things he should be-
hold.
There, she related, her young eyes had view'd
Stone figures shaped like naked flesh and blood,
Which, in the hall and up the gallery placed,
Were proofs, they told her, of a noble taste;
Nor she denied—but, in a public hall,
Her judgment taken, she had clothed them all.
There, too, were station'd, each upon its seat,
Half forms of men, without their hands and feet;
These and what more within that hall might be
She saw, and oh! how long'd her son to see!
Yet could he hope to view that noble place,
Who dared not look the porter in the face?

Forth went the pony, and the rider's knees
Cleaved to her sides—he did not ride with ease;
One hand a whip, and one a bridle held,
In case the pony falter'd or rebell'd.

The village boys beheld him as he pass'd,
And looks of envy on the hero cast;
But he was meek, nor let his pride appear,
Nay, truth to speak, he felt a sense of fear,
Lest the rude beast, unmindful of the rein,
Should take a fancy to turn back again.

He found, and wonder 't is he found, his way,
The orders many that he must obey:
" Now to the right, then left, and now again
" Directly onward, through the winding lane;
" Then, half way o'er the common, by the mill,
" Turn from the cottage and ascend the hill,
" Then—spare the pony, boy!—as you ascend—
" You see the Hall, and that's your journey' end."

Yes, he succeeded, not remembering aught
Of this advice, but by his pony taught.
Soon as he doubted he the bridle threw
On the steed's neck, and said—" Remember you!"
For oft the creature had his father borne,
Sound on his way, and safe on his return.
So he succeeded, and the modest youth
Gave praise, where praise had been assign'd by truth.

His business done,—for fortune led his way
To him whose office was such debts to pay,
The farmer-bailiff, but he saw no more
Than a small room, with bare and oaken floor,
A desk with books thereon—he 'd seen such things before;
" Good day!" he said, but linger'd as he spoke
" Good day," and gazed about with serious look;
Then slowly moved, and then delay'd awhile,
In dumb dismay which raised a lordly smile]
In those who eyed him—then again moved on,
As all might see, unwilling to be gone.

While puzzled thus, and puzzling all about,
Involved, absorb'd, in some bewildering doubt,
A lady enter'd, Madam Johnson call'd,
Within whose presence stood the lad appall'd.
A learned Lady this, who knew the names
Of all the pictures in the golden frames;
Could every subject, every painter, tell,
And on their merits and their failures dwell;
And if perchance there was a slight mistake—
These the most knowing on such matters make.

"And what dost mean, my pretty lad?" she cried,
"Dost stay or go?"—He first for courage tried,
Then for fit words,—then boldly he replied,
That he "would give a hundred pounds, if so
He had them, all about that house to go;
For he had heard that it contain'd such things
As never house could boast, except the king's."

The ruling Lady, smiling, said, "In truth
"Thou shalt behold them all, my pretty youth.
"Tom! first the creature to the stable lead,
"Let it be fed; and you, my child, must feed;
"For three good hours must pass e'er dinner come,"—
"Supper," thought he, "she means, our time at home."

First was he feasted to his heart's content,
Then, all in rapture, with the Lady went;
Through rooms immense, and galleries wide and tall,
He walk'd entranced — he breathed in Silford Hall

Now could he look on that delightful place,
The glorious dwelling of a princely race;
His vast delight was mixed with equal awe,
There was such magic in the things he saw.
Oft standing still, with open mouth and eyes,
Turn'd here and there, alarm'd as one who tries
T' escape from something strange, that would before
him rise.
The wall would part, and beings without name
Would come — for such to his adventures came.
Hence undefined and solemn terror press'd
Upon his mind, and all his powers possess'd.
All he had read of magic, every charm,
Were he alone, might come and do him harm:
But his gaze rested on his friendly guide —
" I 'm safe," he thought, " so long as you abide."

In one large room was found a bed of state —
" And can they soundly sleep beneath such weight,
" Where they may figures in the night explore,
" Form'd by the dim light dancing on the floor
" From the far window; mirrors broad and high
" Doubling each terror to the anxious eye? —
" 'T is strange," thought Peter, " that such things pro-
" No fear in *her;* but there is much in use." [duce

On that reflecting brightness, passing by,
The Boy one instant fix'd his restless eye —
And saw himself: he had before descried
His face in one his mother's store supplied;
But here he could his whole dimensions view,
From the pale forehead to the jet-black shoe.

Passing he look'd, and looking, grieved to pass
From the fair figure smiling in the glass.
'T was so Narcissus saw the boy advance
In the dear fount, and met th' admiring glance
So loved — But no! our happier boy admired,
Not the slim form, but what the form attired,—
The riband, shirt, and frill, all pure and clean,
The white ribb'd stockings, and the coat of green.

The Lady now appear'd to move away —
And this was threat'ning; for he dared not stay,
Lost and alone; but earnestly he pray'd —
" Oh! do not leave me — I am not afraid,
" But 't is so lonesome; I shall never find
" My way alone, no better than the blind."

The Matron kindly to the Boy replied,
" Trust in my promise, I will be thy guide."
Then to the Chapel moved the friendly pair,
And well for Peter that his guide was there!
Dim, silent, solemn was the scene — he felt
The cedar's power, that so unearthly smelt;
And then the stain'd, dark, narrow windows threw
Strange, partial beams on pulpit, desk, and pew:
Upon the altar, glorious to behold,
Stood a vast pair of candlesticks in gold!
With candles tall, and large, and firm, and white,
Such as the halls of giant-kings would light.
There was an organ, too, but now unseen;
A long black curtain served it for a skreen;
Not so the clock, that both by night and day,
Click'd the short moments as they pass'd away.

"Is this a church? and does the parson read"—
Said Peter—"here?—I mean a church indeed."—
"Indeed it is, or as a church is used,"
Was the reply,—and Peter deeply mused,
Not without awe. His sadness to dispel,
They sought the gallery, and then all was well.

Yet enter'd there, although so clear his mind
From every fear substantial and defined,
Yet there remain'd some touch of native fear—
Of something awful to the eye and ear—
A ghostly voice might sound—a ghost itself
appear.

There noble Pictures fill'd his mind with joy—
He gazed and thought, and was no more the
boy;
And Madam heard him speak, with some surprise,
Of heroes known to him from histories.
He knew the actors in the deeds of old,—
He could the Roman marvels all unfold.
He to his guide a theme for wonder grew,
At once so little and so much he knew—
Little of what was passing every day,
And much of that which long had pass'd away;—
So like a man, and yet so like a child,
That his good friend stood wond'ring as she smiled.

The Scripture Pieces caused a serious awe,
And he with reverence look'd on all he saw;
His pious wonder he express'd aloud,
And at the Saviour Form devoutly bow'd.

Portraits he pass'd, admiring; but with pain
Turn'd from some objects, nor would look again.
He seem'd to think that something wrong was done,
When crimes were shown he blush'd to look upon.
Not so his guide — "What youth is that?" she cried,
"That handsome stripling at the lady's side;
"Can you inform me how the youth is named?"
He answer'd, "*Joseph;*" but he look'd ashamed.
"Well, and what then? Had you been Joseph, boy!
"Would you have been so peevish and so coy?"
Our hero answer'd, with a glowing face;
"His mother told him he should pray for grace."
A transient cloud o'ercast the matron's brow;
She seem'd disposed to laugh —— but knew not how;
Silent awhile, then placid she appear'd —
"'T is but a child," she thought, and all was clear'd.

No — laugh she could not; still, the more she sought
To hide her thoughts, the more of his she caught.
A hundred times she had these pictures named,
And never felt perplex'd, disturb'd, ashamed;
Yet now the feelings of a lad so young
Call'd home her thoughts and paralysed her tongue.
She pass'd the offensive pictures silent by,
With one reflecting, self-reproving sigh;
Reasoning how habit will the mind entice
To approach and gaze upon the bounds of vice,
As men, by custom, from some cliff's vast height,
Look pleased, and make their danger their delight.

" Come, let us on! — see there a Flemish view,
" A Country Fair, and all as Nature true.
" See there the merry creatures, great and small,
" Engaged in drinking, gaming, dancing all,
" Fiddling or fighting — all in drunken joy!" —
" But is this Nature?" said the wondering Boy.

" Be sure it is! and those Banditti there —
" Observe the faces, forms, the eyes, the air:
" See rage, revenge, remorse, disdain, despair!"

" And is that Nature, too?" the stripling cried. —
" Corrupted Nature," said the serious guide.

She then display'd her knowledge. — "That, my dear,
" Is call'd a Titian, this a Guido here,
" And yon a Claude — you see that lovely light,
" So soft and solemn, neither day nor night."

"Yes!" quoth the Boy, "and there is just the breeze,
" That curls the water, and that fans the trees;
" The ships that anchor in that pleasant bay
" All look so safe and quiet — Claude, you say?"

On a small picture Peter gazed and stood
In admiration — " 't was so dearly good."
" For how much money think you, then, my Lad,
" Is such a 'dear good picture' to be had?
" 'T is a famed master's work — a Gerard Dow,
" At least the seller told the buyer so."

" I tell the price!" quoth Peter — " I as soon
" Could tell the price of pictures in the moon;

" But I have heard, when the great race was done,
" How much was offer'd for the horse that won." —

" A thousand pounds: but, look the country round,
" And, may be, ten such horses might be found;
" While, ride or run where'er you choose to go,
" You 'll nowhere find so fine a Gerard Dow."

" If this be true," says Peter, " then, of course,
" You'd rate the picture higher than the horse."

" Why, thou 'rt a reasoner, Boy!" the lady cried;
" But see that Infant on the other side;
" 'T is by Sir Joshua. (1) Did you ever see
" A Babe so charming?" — " No, indeed," said he;
" I wonder how he could that look invent,
" That seems so sly, and yet so innocent."

In this long room were various Statues seen,
And Peter gazed thereon with awe-struck mien.

"Why look so earnest, Boy?" — "Because they bring
" To me a story of an awful thing." —
" Tell then thy story." —— He who never stay'd
For words or matter, instantly obey'd. —

" A holy pilgrim to a city sail'd,
" Where every sin o'er sinful men prevail'd;

(1) [" In the year 1783, Mr. Crabbe very frequently passed his mornings at the easel of Sir Joshua Reynolds, conversing on a variety of subjects, while this distinguished artist was employed upon that celebrated painting, then preparing for the Empress Catharine of Russia." — See *Life, antè*, Vol. I. p. 122.]

" Who, when he landed, look'd in every street,
" As he was wont, a busy crowd to meet;
" But now of living beings found he none,
" Death had been there, and turn'd them all to stone;
" All in an instant, as they were employ'd,
" Was life in every living man destroy'd —
" The rich, the poor, the timid, and the bold,
" Made in a moment such as we behold."

" Come, my good lad, you've yet a room to see.
" Are you awake?" — " I am amazed," said he;
" I know they're figures form'd by human skill,
" But 'tis so awful, and this place so still!

" And what is this?" said Peter, who had seen
A long wide table, with its cloth of green,
Its net-work pockets, and its studs of gold —
For such they seem'd, and precious to behold.
There too were ivory balls, and one was red,
Laid with long sticks upon the soft green bed,
And printed tables, on the wall beside —
" Oh! what are these?" the wondering Peter cried.

" This, my good lad, is call'd the Billiard-room,"
Answer'd his guide, " and here the gentry come,
" And with these maces and these cues they play,
" At their spare time, or in a rainy day."

" And what this chequer'd box? — for play, I guess?" —
" You judge it right; 'tis for the game of Chess.

" There! take your time, examine what you will,
" There's King, Queen, Knight, — it is a game of skill:
" And these are Bishops; you the difference see."—
" What! do they make a game of *them?*" quoth he.—
" Bishops, like Kings," she said, " are here but names;
" Not that I answer for their Honours' games."

All round the house did Peter go, and found
Food for his wonder all the house around.
There guns of various bore, and rods, and lines,
And all that man for deed of death designs,
In beast, or bird, or fish, or worm, or fly —
Life in these last must means of death supply;
The living bait is gorged, and both the victims die.
" God gives man leave his creatures to destroy."—
" What! for his sport?" replied the pitying Boy.—
" Nay," said the Lady, " why the sport condemn?
" As die they must, 'tis much the same to them."
Peter had doubts; but with so kind a friend,
He would not on a dubious point contend.

Much had he seen, and every thing he saw
Excited pleasure not unmix'd with awe.
Leaving each room, he turn'd as if once more
To enjoy the pleasure that he felt before —
" What then must their possessors feel? how grand
" And happy they who can such joys command!
" For they may pleasures all their lives pursue,
" The winter pleasures, and the summer's too —
" Pleasures for every hour in every day —
" Oh! how their time must pass in joy away!"

So Peter said.—Replied the courteous Dame:
" What you call pleasure scarcely owns the name.
" The very changes of amusement prove
" There's nothing that deserves a lasting love.
" They hunt, they course, they shoot, they fish, they
game;
" The objects vary, though the end the same —
" A search for that which flies them; no, my Boy!
" 'T is not enjoyment, 't is pursuit of joy."

Peter was thoughtful—thinking, What! not these,
Who can command, or purchase, what they please—
Whom many serve, who only speak the word,
And they have all that earth or seas afford —
All that can charm the mind and please the eye—
And *they* not happy! — but I'll ask her why.

So Peter ask'd. — " 'T is not," she said, " for us,
" Their Honours' inward feelings to discuss;
" But if they're happy, they would still confess
" 'T is not these things that make their happiness.

" Look from this window! at his work behold
" Yon gardener's helper — he is poor and old,
" He not one thing of all you see can call
" His own; but, haply, he o'erlooks them all.
" Hear him! he whistles through his work, or stops
" But to admire his labours and his crops:
" To-day as every former day he fares,
" And for the morrow has nor doubts nor cares;
" Pious and cheerful, proud when he can please,
" Judge if Joe Tompkin wants such things as these.

"Come, let us forward!" and she walk'd in haste
To a large room, itself a work of taste,
But chiefly valued for the works that drew
The eyes of Peter — this indeed was new,
Was most imposing — Books of every kind
Were there disposed, the food for every mind.
With joy perplex'd, round cast he wondering eyes,
Still in his joy, and dumb in his surprise.

Above, beneath, around, on every side,
Of every form and size were Books descried;
Like Bishop Hatto (1), when the rats drew near,
And war's new dangers waked his guilty fear,
When thousands came beside, behind, before,
And up and down came on ten thousand more;
A tail'd and whisker'd army, each with claws
As sharp as needles, and with teeth like saws,(2)—
So fill'd with awe, and wonder in his looks,
Stood Peter, 'midst this multitude of Books;
But guiltless he and fearless; yet he sigh'd
To think what treasures were to him denied.

(1) [For the history of Hatto, Archbishop of Mentz, see Coryat's Crudities, p. 571. See also, among Mr. Southey's minor poems, "God's Judgment on a Bishop."]

(2) ["And in at the windows, and in at the door,
And through the walls by thousands they pour,
And down through the ceiling and up through the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and before,
From within and without, from above and below,
And all at once to the Bishop they go.
They have whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the Bishop's bones,
They gnaw'd the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgment on him!" — SOUTHEY.]

But wonder ceases on continued view;
And the Boy sharp for close inspection grew.
Prints on the table he at first survey'd,
Then to the Books his full attention paid.
At first, from tome to tome, as fancy led,
He view'd the binding, and the titles read;
Lost in delight, and with his freedom pleased,
Then three huge folios from their shelf he seized;
Fixing on one, with prints of every race,
Of beast and bird most rare in every place, —
Serpents, the giants of their tribe, whose prey
Are giants too — a wild ox once a day;
Here the fierce tiger, and the desert's kings,
And all that move on feet, or fins, or wings —
Most rare and strange; a second volume told
Of battles dire, and dreadful to behold,
On sea or land, and fleets dispersed in storms;
A third has all creative fancy forms, —
Hydra and dire chimera, deserts rude,
And ruins grand, enriching solitude:
Whatever was, or was supposed to be,
Saw Peter here, and still desired to see.

Again he look'd, but happier had he been,
That Book of Wonders he had never seen;
For there were tales of men of wicked mind,
And how the Foe of Man deludes mankind.
Magic and murder every leaf bespread —
Enchanted halls, and chambers of the dead,
And ghosts that haunt the scenes where once the victims bled.

Just at this time, when Peter's heart began
To admit the fear that shames the valiant man,
He paused—but why? "Here's one my guard to be;
"When thus protected, none can trouble me:"—
Then rising look'd he round, and lo! alone was he.

Three ponderous doors, with locks of shining brass,
Seem'd to invite the trembling Boy to pass;
But fear forbad, till fear itself supplied
The place of courage, and at length he tried.
He grasp'd the key—Alas! though great his need,
The key turn'd not, the bolt would not recede.
Try then again; for what will not distress?
Again he tried, and with the same success.
Yet one remains, remains untried one door—
A failing hope, for two had fail'd before;
But a bold prince, with fifty doors in sight,
Tried forty-nine before he found the right;
Before he mounted on the brazen horse,
And o'er the walls pursued his airy course.
So his cold hand on this last key he laid:
"Now turn," said he; the treacherous bolt obey'd—
The door receded—bringing full in view
The dim, dull chapel, pulpit, desk, and pew.

It was not right—it would have vex'd a saint;
And Peter's anger rose above restraint.
"Was this her love," he cried, "to bring me here,
"Among the dead, to die myself with fear!"—
For Peter judged, with monuments around,
The dead must surely in the place be found:—

" With cold to shiver, and with hunger pine—
" 'We'll see the rooms,' she said, 'before we dine;'
" And spake so kind! That window gives no light:
" Here is enough the boldest man to fright;
" It hardly now is day, and soon it will be night."

Deeply he sigh'd, nor from his heart could chase
The dread of dying in that dismal place;
Anger and sorrow in his bosom strove,
And banish'd all that yet remain'd of love;
When soon despair had seized the trembling Boy,
But hark, a voice! the sound of peace and joy.

" Where art thou, lad?"—" Oh! here am I, in doubt,
" And sorely frighten'd—can you let me out?"
" Oh! yes, my child; it was indeed a sin,
" Forgetful as I was, to bolt you in.
" I left you reading, and from habit lock'd
" The door behind me, but in truth am shock'd
" To serve you thus; but we will make amends
" For such mistake. Come, cheerly, we are friends."

" Oh! yes," said Peter, quite alive to be
So kindly used, and have so much to see,
And having so much seen; his way he spied,
Forgot his peril, and rejoin'd his guide.

Now all beheld, his admiration raised,
The lady thank'd, her condescension praised,

And fix'd the hour for dinner, forth the Boy
Went in a tumult of o'erpowering joy,
To view the gardens, and what more was found
In the wide circuit of that spacious ground,
Till, with his thoughts bewilder'd, and oppress'd
With too much feeling, he inclined to rest.

Then in the park he sought its deepest shade,
By trees more aged than the mansion made,
That ages stood; and there unseen a brook
Ran not unheard, and thus our traveller spoke,—
"I am so happy, and have such delight,
"I cannot bear to see another sight;
"It wearies one like work;" and so, with deep
Unconscious sigh — he laid him down to sleep.

Thus he reclining slept, and, oh! the joy
That in his dreams possess'd the happy boy,—
Composed of all he knew, and all he read,
Heard, or conceived, the living and the dead.

The Caliph Haroun, walking forth by night
To see young David and Goliath fight,
Rose on his passive fancy — then appear'd
The fleshless forms of beings scorn'd or fear'd
By just or evil men — the baneful race
Of spirits restless, borne from place to place:
Rivers of blood from conquer'd armies ran,
The flying steed was by, the marble man;
Then danced the fairies round their pygmy queen,
And their feet twinkled on the dewy green,

All in the moon-beams' glory. As they fled,
The mountain loadstone rear'd its fatal head,
And drew the iron-bolted ships on shore,
Where he distinctly heard the billows roar, —
Mix'd with a living voice of — "Youngster, sleep
no more,
"But haste to dinner." Starting from the ground,
The waking boy obey'd that welcome sound.

He went and sat, with equal shame and pride,
A welcome guest at Madam Johnson's side.
At his right hand was Mistress Kitty placed,
And Lucy, maiden sly, the stripling faced.
Then each the proper seat at table took —
Groom, butler, footman, laundress, coachman, cook;
For all their station and their office knew,
Nor sat as rustics or the rabble do.

The Youth to each the due attention paid,
And hob-or-nob'd with Lady Charlotte's maid;
With much respect each other they address'd,
And all encouraged their enchanted guest.
Wine, fruit, and sweetmeats closed repast so long,
And Mistress Flora sang an opera song.

Such was the Day the happy Boy had spent,
And forth delighted from the Hall he went:
Bowing his thanks, he mounted on his steed,
More largely fed than he was wont to feed;
And well for Peter that his pony knew
From whence he came, the road he should pur-
sue;

For the young rider had his mind estranged
From all around, disturb'd and disarranged,
In pleasing tumult, in a dream of bliss,
Enjoy'd but seldom in a world like this.

But though the pleasures of the Day were past,—
For lively pleasures are not form'd to last,—
And though less vivid they became, less strong,
Through life they lived, and were enjoy'd as long
So deep the impression of that happy Day,
Not time nor cares could wear it all away;
Ev'n to the last, in his declining years,
He told of all his glories, all his fears.

How blithely forward in that morn he went,
How blest the hours in that fair palace spent,
How vast that Mansion, sure for monarch plann'd,
The rooms so many, and yet each so grand, —
Millions of books in one large hall were found,
And glorious pictures every room around;
Beside that strangest of the wonders there,
That house itself contain'd a house of prayer.

He told of park and wood, of sun and shade,
And how the lake below the lawn was made:
He spake of feasting such as never boy,
Taught in his school, was fated to enjoy —
Of ladies' maids as ladies' selves who dress'd,
And her, his friend, distinguish'd from the rest,
By grandeur in her look, and state that she possess'd.
He pass'd not one; his grateful mind o'erflow'd
With sense of all he felt, and they bestow'd.

He spake of every office, great or small,
Within, without, and spake with praise of all—
So pass'd the happy Boy, that Day at Silford Hall.

[*** In the first draft of "Silford Hall" the conclusion is different; and we think it right to preserve the following verses in a note, as they appear to leave little doubt that the story was in fact suggested by the Poet's recollection of his own boyish visits, when an apothecary's apprentice, to Cheveley, a seat of the noble family with whom, in after-years, he was domesticated as Chaplain.

Dream on, dear Boy! let pass a few brief years,
Replete with troubles, comforts, hopes, and fears,
Bold expectations, efforts wild and strong,
And thou shalt find thy fond conjectures wrong.
Imagination rules thee: thine are dreams,
And every thing to thee is what it seems:
Thou seest the surfaces of things, that pass
Before thee, colour'd by thy fancy's glass.
The fact below is hidden! What is true
In that fair mansion comes not in thy view;
And thou would'st feel a new and strange surprise,
Should all within upon thy mind arise.
Thou think'st the lords of all these glorious things
Are blest supremely! so they are,—like kings!
Envy them not their lofty state, my boy;
They but possess the things that you enjoy.

"Nay, but they're lords of all you see around——
"Ring but a bell, and men obey the sound;
"Make but a motion, with the hand or eye,
"And their attendants at the signal fly."

True, my fair lad! but this is contract all,
For James is paid to heed his Honour's call:
Let wages cease, and lay the livery by,
And James will heed no more than you or I.
Service has lawful bound, and that beyond
Is no obedience — 't is not in the bond.
Footman, or groom, or butler, still he knows,
So does his lord, the duty that he owes.

Labourers, you say, are grieved with daily toil —
True — but the sweater goes not with the soil;
He can change places, change his way of life,
Take new employments, — nay, can take a wife;
If he offend, he knows the law's decree,
Nor can his judge in his accuser see;
And, more than all the rest — or young or old,
Useful or useless, he can not be sold:
Sorrow and want may in his cot be found,
But not a Slave can live on British ground.

Nor have the lords of all this wealth you see,
Their perfect freedom: few are truly free:
Who rank the highest find the check of fate,
And kings themselves are subject to their state.

Riches, and all that we desire to gain,
Bind their possessors in a golden chain —
'T is kept in peril, and 't is lost with pain.

And thou too, Boy! wilt pass unheeding by
The scenes that now delight thine eager eye.
Dream on awhile! and there shall come a strange,
And, couldst thou see it, an amazing change.
Thou who wert late so happy, and so proud,
To be a seat with liveried men allow'd,

And would not, dared not, in thy very shame,
The titles of their noble masters name —
Titles that, scarcely known, upon thy tongue
With tremulous and erring accent hung ——

Oh! had they told thee, when thou sat'st with pride,
And grateful joy, at Madam Johnson's side,
And heard the lisping Flora, blue-eyed maid,
Bid thee be neither bashful nor afraid,
When Mrs. Jane thy burning blush had raised,
Because thy modesty and sense she praised —
Could'st thou have seen that in that place a room
Should be thine own, thy house, thy hall, thy home,
With leave to wander as thou would'st, to read
Just as thy fancy was disposed to feed,
To live with those who were so far above
Thy reach, it seem'd to thee a crime to love,
Or even admire them! — Little didst thou know
How near approach the lofty and the low!
In all we dare, and all we dare not name,
How much the great and little are the same!

Well, thou hast tried it — thou hast closely seen
What greatness has without it, and within;
Where now the joyful expectation? — fled!
The strong anticipating spirit? — dead!]

TALE II.

THE FAMILY OF LOVE.

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THE FAMILY OF LOVE.

In a large town, a wealthy thriving place,
Where hopes of gain excite an anxious race;
Which dark dense wreaths of cloudy volumes cloak,
And mark, for leagues around, the place of smoke:
Where fire to water lends its powerful aid,
And steam produces—strong ally to trade:—
Arrived a Stranger, whom no merchant knew,
Nor could conjecture what he came to do:
He came not there his fortune to amend,
He came not there a fortune made to spend;
His age not that which men in trade employ:
The place not that where men their wealth enjoy:
Yet there was something in his air that told
Of competency gain'd, before the man was old.
He brought no servants with him: those he sought
Were soon his habits and his manners taught—
His manners easy, civil, kind, and free;
His habits such as aged men's will be;
To self indulgent; wealthy men like him
Plead for these failings—'tis their way, their whim.

His frank good-humour, his untroubled air,
His free address, and language bold but fair,
Soon made him friends—such friends as all may make,
Who take the way that he was pleased to take.
He gave his dinners in a handsome style,
And met his neighbours with a social smile;
The wealthy all their easy friend approved,
Whom the more liberal for his bounty loved;
And ev'n the cautious and reserved began
To speak with kindness of the frank old man,
Who, though associate with the rich and grave,
Laugh'd with the gay, and to the needy gave
What need requires. At church a seat was shown,
That he was kindly ask'd to think his own:
Thither he went, and neither cold nor heat,
Pains or pretences, kept him from his seat.
This to his credit in the town was told,
And ladies said, "'T is pity he is old:
"Yet, for his years, the Stranger moves like one
"Who, of his race, has no small part to run."
No envy he by ostentation raised,
And all his hospitable table praised.
His quiet life censorious talk suppress'd,
And numbers hail'd him as their welcome guest.

'T was thought a man so mild, and bounteous too,
A world of good within the town might do;
To vote him honours, therefore, they inclined;
But these he sought not, and with thanks resign'd;
His days of business he declared were past,
And he would wait in quiet for the last;

But for a dinner and a day of mirth
He was the readiest being upon earth.

Men call'd him Captain, and they found the name
By him accepted without pride or shame.
Not in the Navy — that did not appear:
Not in the Army — that at least was clear —
" But as he speaks of sea-affairs, he made,
" No doubt, his fortune in the way of trade;
" He might, perhaps, an India-ship command —
" We'll call him *Captain* now he comes to land."

The Stranger much of various life had seen,
Been poor, been rich, and in the state between;
Had much of kindness met, and much deceit,
And all that man who deals with men must meet.
Not much he read; but from his youth had thought,
And been by care and observation taught:
'T is thus a man his own opinions makes;
He holds that fast, which he with trouble takes:
While one whose notions all from books arise,
Upon his authors, not himself, relies —
A borrow'd wisdom this, that does not make us wise.

Inured to scenes, where wealth and place command
Th' observant eye, and the obedient hand,
A Tory-spirit his — he ever paid
Obedience due, and look'd to be obey'd.
" Man upon man depends, and, break the chain,
" He soon returns to savage life again;

" As of fair virgins dancing in a round,
" Each binds another, and herself is bound,
" On either hand a social tribe he sees,
" By those assisted, and assisting these;
" While to the general welfare all belong,
" The high in power, the low in number strong."

Such was the Stranger's creed—if not profound,
He judg'd it useful, and proclaimed it sound;
And many liked it: invitations went
To Captain Elliot, and from him were sent—
These last so often, that his friends confess'd,
The Captain's cook had not a place of rest.
Still were they something at a loss to guess
What his profession was from his address;
For much he knew, and too correct was he
For a man train'd and nurtured on the sea;
Yet well he knew the seaman's words and ways,—
Seaman's his look, and nautical his phrase:
In fact, all ended just where they began,
With many a doubt of this amphibious man.

Though kind to all, he look'd with special grace
On a few members of an ancient race,
Long known, and well respected in the place:
Dyson their name; but how regard for these
Rose in his mind, or why they seem'd to please,
Or by what ways, what virtues—not a cause
Can we assign, for Fancy has no laws;

But, as the Captain show'd them such respect,
We will not treat the Dysons with neglect.

Their Father died while yet engaged by trade
To make a fortune, that was never made,
But to his children taught; for he would say
"I place them—all I can—in Fortune's way."

James was his first-born; when his father died,
He, in their large domain, the place supplied,
And found, as to the Dysons all appear'd,
Affairs less gloomy than their sire had fear'd;
But then if rich or poor, all now agree,
Frugal and careful, James must wealthy be:
And wealth in wedlock sought, he married soon,
And ruled his Lady from the honey-moon:
Nor shall we wonder; for, his house beside,
He had a sturdy multitude to guide,
Who now his spirit vex'd, and now his temper tried;
Men who by labours live, and, day by day,
Work, weave, and spin their active lives away:
Like bees industrious, they for others strive,
With, now and then, some murmuring in the hive.

James was a churchman—'twas his pride and boast;
Loyal his heart, and "Church and King" his toast;
He for Religion might not warmly feel,
But for the Church he had abounding zeal.

Yet no dissenting sect would he condemn,
" They're nought to us," said he, " nor we to them ;
" 'Tis innovation of our own I hate,
" Whims and inventions of a modern date.

" Why send you Bibles all the world about,
" That men may read amiss, and learn to doubt?
" Why teach the children of the poor to read,
" That a new race of doubters may succeed?
" Now can you scarcely rule the stubborn crew,
" And what if they should know as much as you?
" Will a man labour when to learning bred,
" Or use his hands who can employ his head?
" Will he a clerk or master's self obey,
" Who thinks himself as well-inform'd as they?"

These were his favourite subjects — these he chose,
And where he ruled no creature durst oppose.

" We are rich," quoth James; " but if we thus proceed,
" And give to all, we shall be poor indeed:
" In war we subsidise the world — in peace
" We christianise — our bounties never cease:
" We learn each stranger's tongue, that they with ease
" May read translated Scriptures, if they please;
" We buy them presses, print them books, and then
" Pay and export poor learned, pious men;
" Vainly we strive a fortune now to get,
" So tax'd by private claims, and public debt."

Still he proceeds — "You make your prisons light,
"Airy and clean, your robbers to invite;
"And in such ways your pity show to vice,
"That you the rogues encourage, and entice."

For lenient measures James had no regard—
"Hardship," he said, "must work upon the hard;
"Labour and chains such desperate men require;
"To soften iron you must use the fire."

Active himself, he labour'd to express,
In his strong words, his scorn of idleness;
From him in vain the beggar sought relief—
"Who will not labour is an idle thief,
"Stealing from those who will;" he knew not how
For the untaught and ill-taught to allow,
Children of want and vice, inured to ill,
Unchain'd the passions, and uncurb'd the will.

Alas! he look'd but to his own affairs,
Or to the rivals in his trade, and theirs:
Knew not the thousands who must all be fed,
Yet ne'er were taught to earn their daily bread;
Whom crimes, misfortunes, errors only teach
To seek their food where'er within their reach,
Who for their parents' sins, or for their own,
Are now as vagrants, wanderers, beggars known,
Hunted and hunting through the world, to share
Alms and contempt, and shame and scorn to bear;
Whom Law condemns, and Justice, with a sigh,
Pursuing, shakes her sword and passes by.—

If to the prison we should these commit,
They for the gallows will be render'd fit.

But James had virtues—was esteem'd as one
Whom men look'd up to, and relied upon.
Kind to his equals, social when they met—
If out of spirits, always out of debt;
True to his promise, he a lie disdain'd,
And e'en when tempted in his trade, refrain'd;
Frugal he was, and loved the cash to spare,
Gain'd by much skill, and nursed by constant care;
Yet liked the social board, and when he spoke,
Some hail'd his wisdom, some enjoy'd his joke.
To him a Brother look'd as one to whom,
If fortune frown'd, he might in trouble come;
His Sisters view'd the important man with awe,
As if a parent in his place they saw:
All lived in Love; none sought their private ends;
The Dysons were a Family of Friends.

His brother David was a studious boy,
Yet could his sports as well as books enjoy.
E'en when a boy, he was not quickly read,
If by the heart you judged him, or the head.
His father thought he was decreed to shine,
And be in time an eminent Divine;
But if he ever to the Church inclined,
It is too certain that he changed his mind.
He spoke of scruples, but who knew him best
Affirm'd, no scruples broke on David's rest.
Physic and Law were each in turn proposed,
He weigh'd them nicely, and with Physic closed.

He had a serious air, a smooth address,
And a firm spirit that ensured success.
He watched his brethren of the time, how they
Rose into fame, that he might choose his way.

Some, he observed, a kind of roughness used,
And now their patients banter'd, now abused:
The awe-struck people were at once dismay'd,
As if they begg'd the advice for which they paid.

There are who hold that no disease is slight,
Who magnify the foe with whom they fight.
The sick was told that his was that disease
But rarely known on mortal frame to seize;
Which only skill profound, and full command
Of all the powers in nature could withstand.
Then, if he lived, what fame the conquest gave!
And if he died — "No human power could save!"

Mere fortune sometimes, and a lucky case,
Will make a man the idol of a place —
Who last, advice to some fair duchess gave,
Or snatch'd a widow's darling from the grave,
Him first she honours of the lucky tribe,
Fills him with praise, and woos him to prescribe.
In his own chariot soon he rattles on,
And half believes the lies that built him one.

But not of these was David: care and pain,
And studious toil prepar'd his way to gain.

At first observed, then trusted, he became
At length respected, and acquired a name.
Keen, close, attentive, he could read mankind,
The feeble body, and the failing mind;
And if his heart remain'd untouch'd, his eyes,
His air, and tone, with all could sympathise.

This brought him fees, and not a man was he
In weak compassion to refuse a fee.
Yet though the Doctor's purse was well supplied,
Though patients came, and fees were multiplied,
Some secret drain, that none presumed to know,
And few e'en guess'd, for ever kept it low.
Some of a patient spake, a tender fair,
Of whom the doctor took peculiar care,
But not a fee: he rather largely gave,
Nor spared himself, 'twas said, this gentle friend to save.
Her case consumptive, with perpetual need
Still to be fed, and still desire to feed;
An eager craving, seldom known to cease,
And gold alone brought temporary peace.—

So, rich he was not; James some fear express'd,
Dear Doctor David would be yet distress'd;
For if now poor, when so repaid his skill,
What fate were his, if he himself were ill!

In his religion, Doctor Dyson sought
To teach himself—"A man should not be taught,
"Should not, by forms or creeds, his mind debase,
"That keep in awe an unreflecting race."

He heeded not what Clarke and Paley say,
But thought himself as good a judge as they;
Yet to the Church profess'd himself a friend,
And would the rector for his hour attend;
Nay, praise the learn'd discourse, and learnedly
defend.
For since the common herd of men are blind,
He judged it right that guides should be assign'd;
And that the few who could themselves direct
Should treat those guides with honour and respect.
He was from all contracted notions freed,
But gave his Brother credit for his creed;
And if in smaller matters he indulged,
'T was well, so long as they were not divulged.

Oft was the spirit of the Doctor tried,
When his grave Sister wish'd to be his guide.
She told him, "all his real friends were grieved
" To hear it said, how little he believed:
" Of all who bore the name she never knew
" One to his pastor or his church untrue;
" All have the truth with mutual zeal profess'd,
" And why, dear Doctor, differ from the rest?"

" 'T is my hard fate," with serious looks replied
The man of doubt, "to err with such a guide." —
" Then why not turn from such a painful state?" —
The doubting man replied, "It is my fate."

Strong in her zeal, by texts and reasons back'd,
In his grave mood the Doctor she attack'd:

Cull'd words from Scripture to announce his doom,
And bade him "think of dreadful things to come."

"If such," he answer'd, "be that state untried,
"In peace, dear Martha, let me here abide;
"Forbear to insult a man whose fate is known,
"And leave to Heaven a matter all its own."

In the same cause the Merchant, too, would strive;
He ask'd, "Did ever unbeliever thrive?
"Had he respect? could he a fortune make?
"And why not then such impious men forsake?"

"Thanks, my dear James, and be assured I feel,
"If not your reason, yet at least your zeal;
"And when those wicked thoughts, that keep me poor,
"And bar respect, assail me as before
"With force combin'd, you'll drive the fiend away,
"For you shall reason, James, and Martha pray."

But though the Doctor could reply with ease
To all such trivial arguments as these, —
Though he could reason, or at least deride,
There was a power that would not be defied;
A closer reasoner, whom he could not shun,
Could not refute, from whom he could not run;
For Conscience lived within; she slept, 't is true,
But when she waked, her pangs awaken'd too.
She bade him think; and as he thought, a sigh
Of deep remorse precluded all reply.

No soft insulting smile, no bitter jest,
Could this commanding power of strength divest,
But with reluctant fear her terrors he confess'd.
His weak advisers he could scorn or slight,
But not their cause; for, in their folly's spite,
They took the wiser part, and chose their way aright.

Such was the Doctor, upon whom for aid
Had some good ladies call'd, but were afraid—
Afraid of one who, if report were just,
The arm of flesh, and that alone would trust.
But these were few—the many took no care
Of what they judged to be his own affair:
And if he them from their diseases freed,
They neither cared nor thought about his creed:
They said his merits would for much atone,
And only wonder'd that he lived alone.

The widow'd Sister near the Merchant dwelt,
And her late loss with lingering sorrow felt.
Small was her jointure, and o'er this she sigh'd,
That to her heart its bounteous wish denied,
Which yet all common wants, but not her all, supplied.
Sorrows like showers descend, and as the heart
For them prepares, they good or ill impart;
Some on the mind, as on the ocean rain,
Fall and disturb, but soon are lost again—
Some, as to fertile lands, a boon bestow,
And seed, that else had perish'd, live and grow;
Some fall on barren soil, and thence proceed
The idle blossom, and the useless weed;

But how her griefs the Widow's heart impress'd,
Must from the tenor of her life be guess'd.

Rigid she was, persisting in her grief,
Fond of complaint, and adverse to relief.
In her religion she was all severe,
And as she was, was anxious to appear.
When sorrow died restraint usurp'd the place,
And sate in solemn state upon her face,
Reading she loved not, nor would deign to waste
Her precious time on trifling works of taste;
Though what she did with all that precious time
We know not, but to waste it was a crime—
As oft she said, when with a serious friend
She spent the hours as duty bids us spend;
To read a novel was a kind of sin—
Albeit once Clarissa took her in;
And now of late she heard with much surprise,
Novels there were that made a compromise
Betwixt amusement and religion; these
Might charm the worldly, whom the stories please,
And please the serious, whom the sense would charm,
And thus indulging, be secured from harm—
A happy thought, when from the foe we take
His arms, and use them for religion's sake.

Her Bible she perused by day, by night;
It was her task—she said 't was her delight;
Found in her room, her chamber, and her pew,
For ever studied, yet for ever new—
All must be new that we cannot retain,
And new we find it when we read again.

The hardest texts she could with ease expound,
And meaning for the most mysterious found,
Knew which of dubious senses to prefer:
The want of Greek was not a want in her; —
Instinctive light no aid from Hebrew needs —
But full conviction without study breeds;
O'er mortal powers by inborn strength prevails,
Where Reason trembles, and where Learning fails.

To the church strictly from her childhood bred,
She now her zeal with party-spirit fed:
For brother James she lively hopes express'd,
But for the Doctor's safety felt distress'd;
And her light Sister, poor, and deaf, and blind,
Fill'd her with fears of most tremendous kind.
But David mocked her for the pains she took,
And Fanny gave resentment for rebuke;
While James approved the zeal, and praised the call,
"That brought," he said, "a blessing on them all:
"Goodness like this to all the House extends,
"For were they not a Family of Friends?"

Their sister Frances, though her prime was past,
Had beauty still — nay, beauty form'd to last;
'T was not the lily and the rose combined,
Nor must we say the beauty of the mind;
But feature, form, and that engaging air,
That lives when ladies are no longer fair.
Lovers she had, as she remember'd yet,
For who the glories of their reign forget?

Some she rejected in her maiden pride
And some in maiden hesitation tried,
Unwilling to renounce, unable to decide.
One lost, another would her grace implore,
Till all were lost, and lovers came no more:
Nor had she that, in beauty's failing state,
Which will recall a lover, or create;
Hers was the slender portion, that supplied
Her real wants, but all beyond denied.

When Fanny Dyson reach'd her fortieth year,
She would no more of love or lovers hear;
But one dear Friend she chose, her guide, her stay;
And to each other all the world were they;
For all the world had grown to them unkind,
One sex censorious, and the other blind.
The Friend of Frances longer time had known
The world's deceits, and from its follies flown.
With her dear Friend, life's sober joys to share
Was all that now became her wish and care.
They walk'd together, they conversed and read,
And tender tears for well-feign'd sorrows shed:
And were so happy in their quiet lives,
They pitied sighing maids, and weeping wives.

But Fortune to our state such change imparts,
That Pity stays not long in human hearts;
When sad for others' woes our hearts are grown,
This soon gives place to sorrows of our own.

There was among our guardian Volunteers
A Major Bright — he reckoned fifty years:

A reading man of peace, but call'd to take
His sword and musket for his country's sake;
Not to go forth and fight, but here to stay,
Invaders, should they come, to chase or slay.

Him had the elder Lady long admired,
As one from vain and trivial things retired;
With him conversed; but to a Friend so dear,
Gave not that pleasure — Why? is not so clear;
But chance effected this: the Major now
Gave both the time his duties would allów;
In walks, in visits, when abroad, at home,
The friendly Major would to either come.
He never spoke — for he was not a boy —
Of ladies' charms, or lovers' grief and joy.
All his discourses were of serious kind,
The heart they touch'd not, but they fill'd the mind.
Yet — oh, the pity! from this grave good man
The cause of coolness in the Friends began.
The sage Sophronia — that the chosen name —
Now more polite, and more estranged became.
She could but feel that she had longer known
This valued friend — he was indeed her own;
But Frances Dyson, to confess the truth,
Had more of softness — yes, and more of youth;
And though he said such things had ceased to please,
The worthy Major was not blind to these:
So without thought, without intent, he paid
More frequent visits to the younger Maid.

Such the offence; and though the Major tried
To tie again the knot he thus untied,

His utmost efforts no kind looks repaid, —
He moved no more the inexorable maid.
The Friends too parted, and the elder told
Tales of false hearts, and friendships waxing cold;
And wonder'd what a man of sense could see
In the light airs of wither'd vanity.

'T is said that Frances now the world reviews,
Unwilling all the little left to lose;
She and the Major on the walks are seen,
And all the world is wondering what they mean.

Such were the four whom Captain Elliot drew
To his own board, as the selected few.
For why? they seem'd each other to approve,
And called themselves a Family of Love.

These were not all: there was a Youth beside,
Left to his uncles when his parents died:
A Girl, their sister, by a Boy was led
To Scotland, where a boy and girl may wed —
And they return'd to seek for pardon, pence, and bread.
Five years they lived to labour, weep, and pray,
When Death, in mercy, took them both away.

Uncles and aunts received this lively child,
Grieved at his fate, and at his follies smiled;
But when the child to boy's estate grew on,
The smile was vanish'd, and the pity gone.
Slight was the burden, but in time increased,
Until at length both love and pity ceased.

Then Tom was idle; he would find his way
To his aunt's stores, and make her sweets his prey:
By uncle Doctor on a message sent,
He stopp'd to play, and lost it as he went.
His grave aunt Martha, with a frown austere,
And a rough hand, produced a transient fear;
But Tom, to whom his rude companions taught
Language as rude, vindictive measures sought;
He used such words, that when she wish'd to speak
Of his offence, she had her words to seek.
The little wretch had call'd her — 't was a shame
To think such thought, and more to name such name.

Thus fed and beaten, Tom was taught to pray
For his true friends: "but who," said he, "are they?"
By nature kind, when kindly used, the Boy
Hail'd the strange good with tears of love and joy;
But, roughly used, he felt his bosom burn
With wrath he dared not on his uncles turn;
So with indignant spirit, still and strong,
He nursed the vengeance, and endured the wrong.
To a cheap school, far north, the boy was sent:
Without a tear of love or grief he went;
Where, doom'd to fast and study, fight and play,
He staid five years, and wish'd five more to stay.
He loved o'er plains to run, up hills to climb,
Without a thought of kindred, home, or time;
Till from the cabin of a coasting hoy,
Landed at last the thin and freckled boy,

With sharp keen eye, but pale and hollow cheek,
All made more sad from sickness of a week.
His aunts and uncles felt—nor strove to hide
From the poor boy, their pity and their pride:
He had been taught that he had not a friend,
Save these on earth, on whom he might depend;
And such dependence upon these he had,
As made him sometimes desperate, always sad.

"Awkward and weak, where can the lad be placed,
"And we not troubled, censured, or disgraced?
"Do, Brother James, th' unhappy boy enrol
"Among your set; you only can control."
James sigh'd, and Thomas to the Factory went,
Who there his days in sundry duties spent.
He ran, he wrought, he wrote—to read or play
He had no time, nor much to feed or pray.
What pass'd without he heard not — or he heard
Without concern, what he nor wish'd nor fear'd;
Told of the Captain and his wealth, he sigh'd,
And said, "how well his table is supplied:"
But with the sigh it caused the sorrow fled;
He was not feasted, but he must be fed,
And he could sleep full sound, though not full soft his bed.

But still, ambitious thoughts his mind possess'd,
And dreams of joy broke in upon his rest.
Improved in person, and enlarged in mind,
The good he found not he could hope to find.

Though now enslaved, he hail'd the approaching day,
When he should break his chains and flee away.

Such were the Dysons: they were first of those
Whom Captain Elliot as companions chose;
Them he invited, and the more approved,
As it appear'd that each the other loved.
Proud of their brothers were the sister pair,
And if not proud, yet kind the brothers were.
This pleased the Captain, who had never known,
Or he had loved, such kindred of his own:
Them he invited, save the Orphan lad,
Whose name was not the one his Uncles had;
No Dyson he, nor with the party came —
The worthy Captain never heard his name;
Uncles and Aunts forbore to name the boy,
For then, of course, must follow his employ.
Though all were silent, as with one consent,
None told another what his silence meant,
What hers; but each suppress'd the useless truth,
And not a word was mention'd of the youth.

Familiar grown, the Dysons saw their host,
With none beside them: it became their boast,
Their pride, their pleasure; but to some it seem'd
Beyond the worth their talents were esteem'd.
This wrought no change within the Captain's mind;
To all men courteous, he to them was kind.

One day with these he sat, and only these,
In a light humour, talking at his ease:
Familiar grown, he was disposed to tell
Of times long past, and what in them befell —
Not of his life their wonder to attract,
But the choice tale, or insulated fact.
Then, as it seem'd, he had acquired a right
To hear what they could from their stores recite.
Their lives, they said, were all of common kind;
He could no pleasure in such trifles find.

They had an Uncle — 't is their father's tale —
Who in all seas had gone where ship can sail,
Who in all lands had been, where men can live:
" He could indeed some strange relations give,
" And many a bold adventure; but in vain
" We look for him; he comes not home again."

" And is it so? why then, if so it be,"
Said Captain Elliot, " you must look to me:
" I knew John Dyson"—— Instant every one
Was moved to wonder — " knew my Uncle John!
" Can he be rich? be childless? he is old,
" That is most certain — What! can more be told?
" Will he return, who has so long been gone,
" And lost to us? Oh! what of Uncle John?"

This was aside: their unobservant friend
Seem'd on their thoughts but little to attend;
A traveller speaking, he was more inclined
To tell his story than their thoughts to find.

" Although, my Friends, I love you well, 't is true,
" 'T was your relation turn'd my mind to you;
" For we were friends of old, and friends like us are few;
" And though from dearest friends a man will hide
" His private vices in his native pride,
" Yet such our friendship from its early rise,
" We no reserve admitted, no disguise;
" But 't is the story of my friend I tell,
" And to all others let me bid farewell.

" Take each your glass, and you shall hear how John,
" My old companion, through the world has gone;
" I can describe him to the very life,
" Him and his ways, his ventures, and his wife."

" Wife!" whisper'd all; " then what his life to us,
" His ways and ventures, if he ventured thus?"
This, too, apart; yet were they all intent,
And, gravely listening, sigh'd with one consent.

" My friend, your Uncle, was design'd for trade,
" To make a fortune as his father made;
" But early he perceived the house declined,
" And his domestic views at once resign'd;
" While stout of heart, with life in every limb,
" He would to sea, and either sink or swim.
" No one forbad; his father shook his hand,
" Within it leaving what he could command.

" He left his home, but I will not relate
" What storms he braved, and how he bore his fate,
" Till his brave frigate was a Spanish prize,
" And prison-walls received his first-born sighs,
" Sighs for the freedom that an English boy,
" Or English man, is eager to enjoy.

" Exchanged, he breathed in freedom, and aboard
" An English ship, he found his peace restored;
" War raged around, each British tar was press'd
" To serve his king, and John among the rest;
" Oft had he fought and bled, and 't was his fate
" In that same ship to grow to man's estate.
" Again 't was war: of France a ship appear'd
" Of greater force, but neither shunn'd nor fear'd;
" 'T was in the Indian Sea, the land was nigh,
" When all prepared to fight, and some to die;
" Man after man was in the ocean thrown,
" Limb after limb was to the surgeon shown,
" And John at length, poor John! held forth his own. —

" A tedious case — the battle ceased with day,
" And in the night the foe had slipp'd away.
" Of many wounded were a part convey'd
" To land, and he among the number laid;
" Poor, suffering, friendless, who shall now impart
" Life to his hope, or comfort to his heart?
" A kind good priest among the English there
" Selected him as his peculiar care;
" And, when recover'd, to a powerful friend
" Was pleased the lad he loved to recommend;

" Who read your Uncle's mind, and, pleased to
read,
" Placed him where talents will in time succeed.

" I will not tease you with details of trade,
" But say he there a decent fortune made,—
" Not such as gave him, if return'd, to buy
" A duke's estate, or principality,
" But a fair fortune: years of peace he knew,
" That were so happy, and that seem'd so few.

" Then came a cloud; for who on earth has seen
" A changeless fortune, and a life serene?
" Ah! then how joyous were the hours we spent!
" But joy is restless, joy is not content.

" There one resided, who, to serve his friend,
" Was pleased a gay fair lady to commend;
" Was pleased t' invite the happy man to dine,
" And introduced the subject o'er their wine;
" Was pleased the lady his good friend should know,
" And as a secret his regard would show.

" A modest man lacks courage; but, thus train'd,
" Your Uncle sought her favour and obtain'd:
" To me he spake, enraptured with her face,
" Her angel smile, her unaffected grace;
" Her fortune small indeed; but 'curse the pelf,
" 'She is a glorious fortune in herself!'
" 'John!' answer'd I, 'friend John, to be sincere,
" 'These are fine things, but may be bought too
dear.

" 'You are no stripling, and, it must be said,
" 'Have not the form that charms a youthful maid.
" 'What you possess, and what you leave behind,
" 'When you depart, may captivate her mind;
" 'And I suspect she will rejoice at heart,
" 'Your will once made, if you should soon depart.'

" Long our debate, and much we disagreed;
" 'You need no wife,' I said—said he, 'I need;
" 'I want a house, I want in all I see
" 'To take an interest; what is mine to me?'
" So spake the man, who to his word was just,
" And took the words of others upon trust.
" He could not think that friend in power so high,
" So much esteem'd, could like a villain lie;
" Nor, till the knot, the fatal knot, was tied,
" Had urged his wedding a dishonour'd bride.
" The man he challenged, for his heart was rent
" With rage and grief, and was to prison sent;
" For men in power—and this, alas! was one—
" Revenge on all, the wrongs themselves have done;
" And he whose spirit bends not to the blow
" The tyrants strike, shall no forgiveness know,
" For 't is to slaves alone that tyrants favour show.

" This cost him much; but that he did not heed;
" The lady died, and my poor friend was freed.
" 'Enough of ladies!' then said he, and smiled;
" 'I 've now no longings for a neighbour's child.'
" So patient he return'd, and not in vain,
" To his late duties, and grew rich again.

" He was no miser; but the man who takes
" Care to be rich, will love the gain he makes:
" Pursuing wealth, he soon forgot his woes,
" No acts of his were bars to his repose.

" Now John was rich, and old and weary grown,
" Talk'd of the country that he calls his own,
" And talk'd to me; for now, in fact, began
" My better knowledge of the real man.
" Though long estranged, he felt a strong desire,
" That made him for his former friends enquire;
" What Dysons yet remain'd, he long'd to know,
" And doubtless meant some proofs of love to show.
" His purpose known, our native land I sought,
" And with the wishes of my Friend am fraught."

Fix'd were all eyes, suspense each bosom shook,
And expectation hung on every look.

" 'Go to my kindred, seek them all around,
" 'Find all you can, and tell me all that's found;
" 'Seek them if prosperous, seek them in distress,
" 'Hear what they need, know what they all possess;
" 'What minds, what hearts they have, how good
they are,
" 'How far from goodness — speak, and no one
spare,
" 'And no one slander: let me clearly see
" 'What is in them, and what remains for me.'

" Such is my charge, and haply I shall send
" Tidings of joy and comfort to my Friend.

" Oft would he say, ' If of our race survive
" ' Some two or three, to keep the name alive,
" ' I will not ask if rich or great they be,
" ' But if they live in love, like you and me.'

" 'T was not my purpose yet awhile to speak
" As I have spoken; but why further seek?
" All that I heard I in my heart approve;
" You are indeed a Family of Love:
" And my old friend were happy in the sight
" Of those, of whom I shall such tidings write."

The Captain wrote not: he perhaps was slow,
Perhaps he wish'd a little more to know.
He wrote not yet, and while he thus delay'd,
Frances alone an early visit paid.
The maiden Lady braved the morning cold,
To tell her Friend what duty bade be told,
Yet not abruptly — she has first to say,
" How cold the morning, but how fine the day; —
" I fear you slept but ill, we kept you long,
" You made us all so happy, but 't was wrong —
" So entertain'd, no wonder we forgot
" How the time pass'd; I fear me you did not."

In this fair way the Lady seldom fail'd
To steer her course, still sounding as she sail'd.

" Dear Captain Elliot, how your Friends you read!
" We are a loving Family indeed;
" Left in the world each other's aid to be,
" And join to raise a fallen family.

" Oh! little thought we there was one so near,
" And one so distant, to us all so dear:
" All, all alike; he cannot know, dear man!
" Who needs him most, as one among us can—
" One who can all our wants distinctly view,
" And tell him fairly what were just to do:
" But you, dear Captain Elliot, as his friend,
" As ours, no doubt, will your assistance lend.
" Not for the world would I my Brothers blame;
" Good men they are: 't was not for that I came.
" No! did they guess what shifts I make, the grief
" That I sustain, they 'd fly to my relief;
" But I am proud as poor; I cannot plead
" My cause with them, nor show how much I need;
" But to my Uncle's Friend it is no shame,
" Nor have I fear, to seem the thing I am;
" My humble pittance life's mere need supplies,
" But all indulgence, all beyond denies.
" I aid no pauper, I myself am poor,
" I cannot help the beggar at my door.
" I from my scanty table send no meat;
" Cook'd and recook'd is every joint I eat.
" At Church a sermon begs our help,—I stop
" And drop a tear; nought else have I to drop;
" But pass the out-stretch'd plate with sorrow by,
" And my sad heart this kind relief deny.
" My dress—I strive with all my maiden skill
" To make it pass, but 'tis disgraceful still;
" Yet from all others I my wants conceal,
" Oh! Captain Elliot, there are few that feel!

" But did that rich and worthy Uncle know
" What you, dear Sir, will in your kindness show,
" He would his friendly aid with generous hand
bestow.

" Good men my Brothers both, and both are
raised
" Far above want—the Power that gave be praised!
" My Sister's jointure, if not ample, gives
" All she can need, who as a lady lives;
" But I, unaided, may through all my years
" Endure these ills—forgive these foolish tears.

" Once, my dear Sir—I then was young and
gay,
" And men would talk—but I have had my day:
" Now all I wish is so to live, that men
" May not despise me whom they flatter'd then.
" If you, kind Sir——"
Thus far the Captain heard,
Nor save by sign or look had interfered;
But now he spoke; to all she said agreed,
And she conceived it useless to proceed.
Something he promised, and the Lady went
Half-pleased away, yet wondering what he meant;
Polite he was and kind, but she could trace
A smile, or something like it, in his face;
'Twas not a look that gave her joy or pain—
She tried to read it, but she tried in vain.

Then call'd the Doctor—'twas his usual way—
To ask " How fares my worthy friend to-day?"

To feel his pulse, and as a friend to give
Unfee'd advice, how such a man should live;
And thus, digressing, he could soon contrive,
At his own purpose smoothly to arrive.

" My Brother! yes, he lives without a care,
" And, though he needs not, yet he loves to spare:
" James I respect; and yet it must be told,
" His speech is friendly, but his heart is cold.
" His smile assumed has not the real glow
" Of love! — a sunbeam shining on the snow.
" Children he has; but are they causes why
" He should our pleas resist, our claims deny?
" Our father left the means by which he thrives,
" While we are labouring to support our lives.
" *We*, need I say? my widow'd Sister lives
" On a large jointure; nay, she largely gives;—
" And Fanny sighs—for gold does Fanny sigh?
" Or wants she that which money cannot buy—
" Youth and young hopes?—Ah! could my kindred share
" The liberal mind's distress, and daily care,
" The painful toil to gain the petty fee,
" They'd bless their stars, and join to pity me.
" Hard is his fate, who would, with eager joy,
" To save mankind, his every power employ;
" Yet in his walk unnumber'd insults meets
" And gains 'mid scorn the food that chokes him as he eats.

" Oh! Captain Elliot, you who know mankind,
" With all the anguish of the feeling mind,

" Bear to our kind relation these the woes
" That e'en to you 'tis misery to disclose.
" You can describe what I but faintly trace —
" A man of learning cannot bear disgrace;
" Refinement sharpens woes that wants create,
" And 't is fresh grief such grievous things to state;
" Yet those so near me let me not reprove —
" I love them well, and they deserve my love;
" But want they know not — Oh! that I could say
" I am in this as ignorant as they."

The Doctor thus. — The Captain grave and kind,
To the sad tale with serious looks inclined,
And promise made to keep th' important speech in mind.

James and the Widow, how is yet unknown,
Heard of these visits, and would make their own.
All was not fair, they judged, and both agreed
To their good Friend together to proceed.
Forth then they went to see him, and persuade —
As warm a pair as ever Anger made.
The Widow lady must the speaker be:
So James agreed; for words at will had she;
And then her Brother, if she needed proof,
Should add, "'T is truth:" — it was for him enough.

" Oh! sir, it grieves me" — for we need not dwell
On introduction: all was kind and well. —
" Oh! sir, it grieves, it shocks us both to hear
" What has, with selfish purpose, gain'd your ear —
" Our very flesh and blood, and, as you know, how dear.

" Doubtless they came your noble mind t' impress
" With strange descriptions of their own distress;
" But I would to the Doctor's face declare,
" That he has more to spend and more to spare,
" With all his craft, than we with all our care.

" And for our Sister, all she has she spends
" Upon herself; herself alone befriends.
" She has the portion that our father left,
" While me of mine a careless wretch bereft,
" Save a small part; yet I could joyful live,
" Had I my mite—the widow's mite—to give.
" For this she cares not; Frances does not know
" Their heartfelt joy, who largely can bestow.
" You, Captain Elliot, feel the pure delight,
" That our kind acts in tender hearts excite,
" When to the poor we can our alms extend,
" And make the Father of all Good our friend;
" And, I repeat, I could with pleasure live,
" Had I my mite—the widow's mite—to give.

" We speak not thus, dear Sir, with vile intent,
" Our nearest friends to wrong or circumvent;
" But that our Uncle, worthy man! should know
" How best his wealth, Heaven's blessing, to bestow;
" What widows need, and chiefly those who feel
" For all the sufferings which they cannot heal;
" And men in trade, with numbers in their pay,
" Who must be ready for the reckoning-day,
" Or gain or lose!"—
—" Thank Heaven," said James, " as yet
" I've not been troubled by a dun or debt."

—The Widow sigh'd, convinced that men so weak
Will ever hurt the cause for which they speak;
However tempted to deceive, still they
Are ever blundering to the broad high-way
Of very truth:—But Martha pass'd it by
With a slight frown, and half-distinguish'd sigh—

"Say to our Uncle, sir, how much I long
"To see him sit his kindred race among:
"To hear his brave exploits, to nurse his age,
"And cheer him in his evening's pilgrimage;
"How were I blest to guide him in the way
"Where the religious poor in secret pray,
"To be the humble means by which his heart
"And liberal hand might peace and joy impart!
"But now, farewell!"—and slowly, softly fell
The tender accents as she said "farewell!"

The Merchant stretch'd his hand, his leave to take,
And gave the Captain's a familiar shake,
Yet seem'd to doubt if this was not too free,
But, gaining courage, said, "Remember me."

Some days elaps'd, the Captain did not write,
But still was pleased the party to invite;
And, as he walk'd, his custom every day,
A tall pale stripling met him on his way,
Who made some efforts, but they proved too weak,
And only show'd he was inclined to speak. [gave
"What would'st thou, lad?" the Captain ask'd, and
The youth a power his purposed boon to crave,
Yet not in terms direct—"My name," quoth he,
"Is Thomas Bethel; you have heard of me."—

" Not good nor evil, Thomas—had I need
" Of so much knowledge:—but pray now proceed."—

" Dyson my mother's name; but I have not
" That interest with you, and the worse my lot.
" I serve my Uncle James, and run and write,
" And watch and work from morning until night;
" Confined among the looms, and webs, and wheels,
" You cannot think how like a slave one feels.
" 'T is said you have a ship at your command,—
" An' please you, sir, I 'm weary of the land,
" And I have read of foreign parts such things,
" As make me sick of Uncle's wheels and springs."

" But, Thomas, why to sea? you look too slim
" For that rough work—and, Thomas, can you swim?"
That he could not, but still he scorn'd a lie,
And boldly answer'd, " No, but I can try."—
" Well, my good lad, but tell me, can you read?"
Now, with some pride he answer'd, " Yes, indeed!
" I construe Virgil, and our usher said,
" I might have been in Homer had I staid,
" And he was sorry when I came away,
" And so was I, but Uncle would not pay;
" He told the master I had read enough,
" And Greek was all unprofitable stuff;
" So all my learning now is thrown away,
" And I 've no time for study or for play;
" I 'm ordered here and there, above, below,
" And call'd a dunce for what I cannot know;
" Oh, that I were but from this bondage free!
" Do, please your honour, let me go to sea."

" But why to sea? they want no Latin there;
" Hard is their work, and very hard their fare."

" But then," said Thomas, " if on land, I doubt
" My Uncle Dyson soon would find me out;
" And though he tells me what I yearly cost,
" 'T is my belief he 'd miss me were I lost.
" For he has said, that I can act as well
" As he himself — but this you must not tell."

" Tell, Thomas! no, I scorn the base design,
" Give me your hand, I pledge my word with mine;
" And if I cannot do thee good, my friend,
" Thou may'st at least upon that word depend.
" And hark ye, lad, thy worthy name retain
" To the last hour, or I shall help in vain;
" And then the more severe and hard thy part,
" Thine the more praise, and thine the happier art.
" We meet again — farewell!" — and Thomas went
Forth to his tasks, half angry, half content.

" I never ask'd for help," thought he, " but twice,
" And all they then would give me was advice;
" My Uncle Doctor, when I begg'd his aid,
" Bade me work on, and never be afraid,
" But still be good; and I've been good so long,
" I'm half persuaded that they tell me wrong.
" And now this Captain still repeats the same,
" But who can live upon a virtuous name,
" Starving and praised? — 'have patience — patience still!'
" He said and smiled, and, if I can, I will."

So Thomas rested with a mind intent
On what the Captain by his kindness meant.

Again the invited party all attend,
These dear relations, on this generous Friend.
They ate, they drank, each striving to appear
Fond, frank, forgiving—above all, sincere.
Such kindred souls could not admit disguise,
Or envious fears, or painful jealousies;
So each declared, and all in turn replied,
"'Tis just indeed, and cannot be denied."

Now various subjects rose,—the country's cause,
The war, the allies, the lottery, and the laws.
The widow'd Sister then advantage took
Of a short pause, and, smiling softly, spoke:
She judged what subject would his mind excite—
"Tell us, dear Captain, of that bloody fight,
"When our brave Uncle, bleeding at his gun,
"Gave a loud shout to see the Frenchmen run."

"Another day,"—replied the modest host;
"One cannot always of one's battles boast.
"Look not surprise—behold the man in me!
"Another Uncle shall you never see.
"No other Dyson to this place shall come,
"Here end my travels, here I place my home;
"Here to repose my shatter'd frame I mean,
"Until the last long journey close the scene."

The Ladies softly brush'd the tear away;
James look'd surprise, but knew not what to say;

But Doctor Dyson lifted up his voice,
And said, " Dear Uncle, how we all rejoice !"

" No question, Friends ! and I your joy approve,
" We are, you know, a Family of Love."

So said the wary Uncle, but the while
Wore on his face a questionable smile,
That vanish'd, as he spake in grave and solemn style —

" Friends and relations ! let us henceforth seem
" Just as we are, nor of our virtues dream,
" That with our waking vanish. — What we are
" Full well we know — t' improve it be our care.
" Forgive the trial I have made : 'tis one
" That has no more than I expected done.
" If as frail mortals you, my Friends, appear,
" I look'd for no angelic beings here,
" For none that riches spurn'd as idle pelf,
" Or served another as he served himself.
" Deceived no longer, let us all forgive ;
" I'm old, but yet a tedious time may live.
" This dark complexion India's suns bestow,
" These shrivell'd looks to years of care I owe ;
" But no disease ensures my early doom, —
" And I may live — forgive me — years to come.
" But while I live, there may some good be done,
" Perchance to many, but at least to One." —

Here he arose, retired, return'd, and brought
The Orphan boy, whom he had train'd and taught

For this his purpose; and the happy boy,
Though bade to hide, could ill suppress, his joy.—

" This young relation, with your leave, I take,
" That he his progress in the world may make—
" Not in my house a slave or spy to be,
" And first to flatter, then to govern me;—
" He shall not nurse me when my senses sleep,
" Nor shall the key of all my secrets keep,
" And be so useful, that a dread to part
" Shall make him master of my easy heart;—
" But to be placed where merit may be proved,
" And all that now impedes his way removed.

" And now no more on these affairs I dwell,
" What I possess that I alone can tell,
" And to that subject we will bid farewell.
" As go I must, when Heaven is pleased to call,
" What I shall leave will seem or large or small,
" As you shall view it. When this pulse is still,
" You may behold my wealth, and read my will.

" And now, as Captain Elliot much has known,
" That to your Uncle never had been shown,
" From him one word of honest counsel hear—
" *And think it always gain to be sincere.*"

TALE III.

THE EQUAL MARRIAGE.

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THERE are gay nymphs whom serious matrons blame,
And men adventurous treat as lawful game,—
Misses, who strive, with deep and practised arts,
To gain and torture inexperienced hearts;
The hearts entangled they in pride retain,
And at their pleasure make them feel their chain:
For this they learn to manage air and face,
To look a virtue, and to act a grace,
To be whatever men with warmth pursue —
Chaste, gay, retiring, tender, timid, true,
To-day approaching near, to-morrow just in view.

Maria Glossip was a thing like this —
A much observing, much experienced Miss;
Who on a stranger-youth would first decide
Th' important question — "Shall I be his bride?"
But if unworthy of a lot so bless'd,
'Twas something yet to rob the man of rest;
The heart, when stricken, she with hope could feed,
Could court pursuit, and, when pursued, recede.

Hearts she had won, and with delusion fed,
With doubt bewilder'd, and with hope misled;
Mothers and rivals she had made afraid,
And wrung the breast of many a jealous maid;
Friendship, the snare of lovers, she profess'd,
And turn'd the heart's best feelings to a jest.

Yet seem'd the Nymph as gentle as a dove,
Like one all guiltless of the game of love,—
Whose guileless innocence might well be gay;
Who had no selfish secrets to betray;
Sure, if she play'd, she knew not how to play.
Oh! she had looks so placid and demure,
Not Eve, ere fallen, seem'd more meek or pure;
And yet the Tempter of the falling Eve
Could not with deeper subtilty deceive.

A Sailor's heart the Lady's kindness moved,
And winning looks, to say how well he loved;
Then left her hopeful for the stormy main,
Assured of love when he return'd again.
Alas! the gay Lieutenant reach'd the shore,
To be rejected, and was gay no more;
Wine and strong drink the bosom's pain suppress'd,
Till Death procured, what Love denied him—rest.
But men of more experience learn to treat
These fair enslavers with their own deceit.

Finch was a younger brother's youngest son,
Who pleased an Uncle with his song and gun;

Who call'd him 'Bob,' and 'Captain'— by that name
Anticipating future rank and fame:
Not but there was for this some fair pretence—
He was a cornet in the Home Defence.
The Youth was ever drest in dapper style,
Wore spotless linen, and a ceaseless smile;
His step was measured, and his air was nice—
They bought him high, who had him at the price
That his own judgment and becoming pride,
And all the merit he assumed, implied.
A life he loved of liberty and ease,
And all his pleasant labour was to please;
Not call'd at present hostile men to slay,
He made the hearts of gentle dames his prey.

Hence tales arose, and one of sad report—
A fond, fair girl became his folly's sport,—
A cottage lass, who "knew the youth would prove
"For ever true, and give her love for love;
"Sure when he could, and that would soon be known,
"He would be proud to show her as his own."

But still she felt the village damsels' sneer,
And her sad soul was fill'd with secret fear;
His love excepted, earth was all a void,
And he, the excepted man, her peace destroy'd.
When the poor Jane was buried, we could hear
The threat of rustics whisper'd round her bier.

Stories like this were told, but yet, in time
Fair ladies lost their horror at the crime;

They knew that cottage girls were forward things,
Who never heed a nettle till it stings;
Then, too, the Captain had his fault confess'd,
And scorn'd to turn a murder to a jest.

Away with murder!—This accomplish'd swain
Beheld Maria, and confess'd her reign—
She came, invited by the rector's wife,
Who "never saw such sweetness in her life."
Now, as the rector was the Uncle's friend,
It pleased the Nephew there his steps to bend,
Where the fair damsel then her visit paid,
And seem'd an unassuming rustic maid:
A face so fair, a look so meek, he found [wound.
Had pierced that heart, no other nymph could

"Oh, sweet Maria"—so began the Youth
His meditations—"thine the simple truth!
"Thou hast no wicked wisdom of thy sex,
"No wish to gain a subject-heart—then vex.
"That heavenly bosom no proud passion swells,
"No serpent's wisdom with thy meekness dwells;
"Oh! could I bind thee to my heart, and live
"In love with thee, on what our fortunes give!
"Far from the busy world, in some dear spot,
"Where Love reigns king, we'd find some peaceful cot.
"To wed, indeed, no prudent man would choose;
"But, such a maid will lighter bonds refuse!"

And was this youth a rake?—In very truth;
Yet, feeling love, he felt it as a youth;

If he had vices, they were laid aside;
He quite forgot the simple girl who died;
With dear Maria he in peace would live,
And what had pass'd — Maria would forgive.

The fair Coquette at first was pleased to find
A swain so knowing had become so blind;
And she determined, with her utmost skill,
To bind the rebel to her sovereign will.
She heard the story of the old deceit,
And now resolved he should with justice meet;—
" Soon as she saw him on her hook secure,
" He should the pangs of perjured man endure."

These her first thoughts — but as, from time to time,
The Lover came, she dwelt not on his crime—
" Crime could she call it? prudes, indeed, condemn
" These slips of youth — but she was not of them."
So gentler thoughts arose as, day by day,
The Captain came his passion to display.
When he display'd his passion, and she felt,
Not without fear, her heart begin to melt —
Joy came with terror at a state so new;
Glad of his truth; if he indeed were true!

This she decided as the heart decides,
Resolved to be the happiest of brides.
" Not great my fortune—hence," said she, " 't is plain,
" Me, and not mine, dear Youth! he hopes to gain;
" Nor has he much; but, as he sweetly talks,
" We from our cot shall have delightful walks,

" Love, lord within it! I shall smile to see
" My little cherubs on the father's knee."
Then sigh'd the nymph, and in her fancied lot,
She all the mischiefs of the past forgot.

Such were their tender meditations; thus
Would they the visions of the day discuss:
Each, too, the old sad habits would no more
Indulge; both dare be virtuous and be poor.

They both had past the year when law allows
Free-will to lover who would fain be spouse:
Yet the good youth his Uncle's sanction sought—
" Marry her, Bob! and are you really caught?
" Then you've exchanged, I warrant, heart for heart—
" 'T is well! I meant to warn her of your art:
" This Parson's Babe has made you quite a fool—
" But are you sure your ardour will not cool?
" Have you not habits, Boy? but take your chance!
" How will you live? I cannot much advance.
" But hear you not what through the village flies,
" That this your dove is famed for her disguise?
" Yet, say they not, she leads a gayish life?
" Art sure she 'll show the virtues of a wife?"—

" Oh, Sir, she's all that mortal man can love!"—
" Then marry, Bob! and that the fact will prove—
" Yet in a kind of lightness, folk agree."—
" Lightness in her! indeed, it cannot be—
" 'T is Innocence alone that makes her manners free."

"Well, my good friend! then Innocence alone
"Is to a something like Flirtation prone;
"And I advise—but let me not offend—
"That Prudence should on Innocence attend,
"Lest some her sportive purity mistake,
"And term your angel more than half a rake."

The Nymph, now sure, could not entirely curb
The native wish her lover to disturb.
Oft he observed her, and could ill endure
The gentle coquetry of maid so pure:
Men he beheld press round her, and the Fair
Caught every sigh, and smiled at every prayer;
And grieved he was with jealous pains to see
The effects of all her wit and pleasantry.

"Yet why alarm'd?"—he said; "with so much sense,
"She has no freedom, dashing, or pretence:
"'Tis her gay mind, and I should feel a pride
"In her chaste levities"—he said, and sigh'd.
Yet, when apart from company, he chose
To talk a little of his bosom's woes—
But one sweet smile, and one soft speech, suppress'd
All pain, and set his feeling heart at rest.
Nay, in return, she felt, or feign'd, a fear,
"He was too lively to be quite sincere—
"She knew a certain lady, and could name
"A certain time"— So, even was the blame,
And thus the loving pair more deep in love became.

They married soon — for why delay the thing
That such amazing happiness would bring? —
Now of that blissful state, O Muse of Hymen! sing.

Love dies all kinds of death: in some so quick
It comes — he is not previously sick;
But ere the sun has on the couple shed
The morning rays, the smile of Love is fled.

And what the cause? for Love should not expire,
And none the reason of such fate require.
Both had a mask, that with such pains they wore,
Each took it off when it avail'd no more.
They had no feeling of each other's pain;
To wear it longer had been crime in vain.

As in some pleasant eve we view the scene,
Though cool yet calm, if joyless yet serene, —
Who has not felt a quiet still delight
In the clear, silent, love-befriending night?
The moon so sweetly bright, so softly fair,
That all but happy lovers would be there, —
Thinking there must be in her still domain
Something that soothes the sting of mortal pain;
While earth itself is dress'd in light so clear,
That they might rest contented to be here!

Such is the night; but when the morn awakes,
The storm arises, and the forest shakes;
This mighty change the grieving travellers find,
The freezing snows fast drifting in the wind;

Firs deeply laden shake the snowy top,
Streams slowly freezing, fretting till they stop;
And void of stars the angry clouds look down
On the cold earth, exchanging frown with frown.

Such seem'd, at first, the cottage of our pair —
Fix'd in their fondness, in their prospects fair;
Youth, health, affection, all that life supplies,
Bright as the stars that gild the cloudless skies —
Were theirs — or seem'd to be, but soon the scene
Was black as if its light had never been.
Weary full soon, and restless then they grew,
Then off the painful mask of prudence threw,
For Time has told them all; and taught them what to rue.
They long again to tread the former round
Of dissipation — "Why should he be bound,
"While his sweet inmate of the cottage sighs
"For adulation, rout, and rhapsodies?
"Not Love himself, did love exist, could lead
"A heart like hers, that flutter'd to be freed."

But Love, or what seem'd like him, quickly died,
Nor Prudence, nor Esteem, his place supplied.
Disguise thrown off, each reads the other's heart,
And feels with horror that they cannot part.

Still they can speak — and 't is some comfort still,
That each can vex the other when they will:

Words half in jest to words in earnest led,
And these the earnest angry passions fed,
Till all was fierce reproach, and peace for ever fled.

" And so you own it! own it to my face,
" Your love is vanish'd — infamous and base!"

" Madam, I loved you truly, while I deem'd
" You were the truthful being that you seem'd;
" But when I see your native temper rise
" Above control, and break through all disguise,
" Casting it off, as serpents do their skin,
" And showing all the folds of vice within, —
" What see I then to love? was I in love with Sin?"—

" So may I think, and you may feel it too;
" A loving couple, Sir, were Sin and you!
" Whence all this anger? is it that you find
" You cannot always make a woman blind?
" You talk of falsehood and disguise — talk on!
" But all my trust and confidence are gone;
" Remember you, with what a serious air
" You talk'd of love, as if you were at prayer?
" You spoke of home-born comforts, quiet, ease,
" And the pure pleasure, that must always please,
" With an assumed and sentimental air,
" Smiting your breast, and acting like a player.
" Then your life's comfort! and your holy joys!
" Holy, forsooth! and your sweet girls and boys,
" How you would train them! — All this farce
review,
" And then, Sir, talk of being just and true!" —

" Madam! your sex expects that ours should lie.
" The simple creatures know it, and comply—
" You hate the truth; there 's nothing you despise
" Like a plain man, who spurns your vanities.
" Are you not early taught your prey to catch?
" When your mammas pronounce — ' A proper match!' [tongue,
" What said your own? — ' Do, daughter! curb your
" ' And you may win him, for the man is young;
" ' But if he views you as ourselves, good-by
" ' To speculation! — He will never try.'

" Then is the mask assumed, and then you bait
" Your hook with kindness! and as anglers wait,
" Now here, now there, with keen and eager glance,
" Marking your victims as the shoals advance;
" When, if the gaping wretch should make a snap,
" You jerk him up, and have him in your trap,
" Who gasping, panting, in your presence lies,
" And you exulting view the imprison'd prize.

" Such are your arts! while he did but intend,
" In harmless play an idle hour to spend,
" Lightly to talk of love! your fix'd intent
" Is on to lure him, where he never meant
" To go, but going, must his speed repent.
" If he of Cupid speaks, you watch your man,
" And make a change for Hymen, if you can;
" Thus he, ingenuous, easy, fond, and weak,
" Speaks the rash words he has been led to speak;
" Puts the dire question that he meant to shun,
" And by a moment's frenzy is undone."—

" Well ! " said the Wife, " admit this nonsense true, —
" A mighty prize she gains in catching you ;
" For my part, Sir, I most sincerely wish
" My landing-net had miss'd my precious fish ! " —

" Would that it had ! or I had wisely lent
" An ear to those who said I should repent." —

" Hold, Sir ! at least my reputation spare,
" And add another falsehood if you dare." —

" Your reputation, Madam ! — rest secure,
" That will all scandal and reproach endure,
" And be the same in worth : it is like him
" Who floats, but finds he cannot sink or swim ;
" Half raised above the storm, half sunk below,
" It just exists, and that is all we know.
" Such the good name that you so much regard,
" And yet to keep afloat find somewhat hard.
" Nay, no reply ! in future I decline
" Dispute, and take my way." —
" And I, Sir, mine."

Oh ! happy, happy, happy pair ! both sought,
Both seeking — catching both, and caught !

TALE IV.

RACHEL.

TALE IV.

RACHEL.

It chanced we walk'd upon the heath, and met
A wandering woman; her thin clothing wet
With morning fog; the little care she took
Of things like these, was written in her look.
Not pain from pinching cold was in her face,
But hurrying grief, that knows no resting place, —
Appearing ever as on business sent,
The wandering victim of a fix'd intent;
Yet in her fancied consequence and speed,
Impell'd to beg assistance for her need.

When she beheld my friend and me, with eye
And pleading hand, she sought our charity;
More to engage our friendly thoughts the while,
She threw upon her miseries a smile,
That, like a varnish on a picture laid,
More prominent and bold the figures made;
Yet was there sign of joy that we complied,
The moment's wish indulged and gratified.

" Where art thou wandering, Rachel? whither
stray,
" From thy poor heath in such unwholesome day?"
Ask'd my kind friend, who had familiar grown
With Rachel's grief, and oft compassion shown;
Oft to her hovel had in winter sent
The means of comfort — oft with comforts went.
Him well she knew, and with requests pursued,
Though too much lost and spent for gratitude.

" Where art thou wandering, Rachel? let me
hear?" —
" The fleet! the fleet!" she answer'd, " will ap-
pear
" Within the bay, and I shall surely know
" The news to-night! — turn tide, and breezes
blow!
" For if I lose my time, I must remain
" Till the next year before they come again!"

" What can they tell thee, Rachel?" —
" Should I say,
" I must repent me to my dying day.
" Then I should lose the pension that they give;
" For who would trust their secrets to a sieve?
" I must be gone!" — And with her wild, but keen
And crafty look, that would appear to mean,
She hurried on; but turn'd again to say,
" All will be known: they anchor in the bay;
" Adieu! be secret! — sailors have no home:
" Blow wind, turn tide! — Be sure the fleet will
come."

Grown wilder still, the frantic creature strode
With hurried feet upon the flinty road.
On her departing form I gazed with pain —
" And should you not," I cried, " her ways restrain?
" What hopes the wild deluded wretch to meet?
" And means she aught by this expected fleet?
" Knows she her purpose? has she hope to see
" Some friend to aid her in her poverty?
" Why leave her thus bewilder'd to pursue
" The fancy's good, that never comes in view?" —

" Nay! she is harmless, and if more confined,
" Would more distress in the coercion find.
" Save at the times when to the coast she flies,
" She rests, nor shows her mind's obliquities,
" But ever talks she of the sea, and shows
" Her sympathy with every wind that blows.
" We think it, therefore, useless to restrain
" A creature of whose conduct none complain,
" Whose age and looks protect her, — should they fail,
" Her craft and wild demeanour will prevail.
" A soldier once attack'd her on her way —
" She spared him not, but bade him kneel and pray —
" Praying herself aloud — th' astonish'd man
" Was so confounded, that away he ran.

" Her sailor left her, with, perhaps, intent
" To make her his — 'tis doubtful what he meant:
" But he was captured, and the life he led
" Drove all such young engagements from his head.

" On him she ever thought, and none beside,
" Seeking her love, were favour'd or denied;
" On her dear David she had fix'd her view,
" And fancy judged him ever fond and true.
" Nay, young and handsome — Time could not destroy —
" No — he was still the same — her gallant boy!
" Labour had made her coarse, and her attire
" Show'd that she wanted no one to admire;
" None to commend her; but she could conceive
" The same of him, as when he took his leave,
" And gaily told what riches he would bring,
" And grace her hand with the symbolic ring.

" With want and labour was her mind subdued;
" She lived in sorrow and in solitude.
" Religious neighbours, kindly calling, found
" Her thoughts unsettled, anxious, and unsound;
" Low, superstitious, querulous, and weak,
" She sought for rest, but knew not how to seek;
" And their instructions, though in kindness meant,
" Were far from yielding the desired content.
" They hoped to give her notions of their own,
" And talk'd of ' feelings' she had never known;
" They ask'd of her ' experience,' and they bred,
" In her weak mind, a melancholy dread
" Of something wanting in her faith, of some —
" She knew not what — ' acceptance,' that should come;
" And as it came not, she was much afraid
" That she in vain had served her God and pray'd.

" She thought her Lover dead. In prayer she named
" The erring Youth, and hoped he was reclaim'd.
" This she confess'd; and trembling, heard them say,
" ' Her prayers were sinful — So the papists pray.
" ' Her David's fate had been decided long,
" ' And prayers and wishes for his state were wrong.'

" Had these her guides united love and skill,
" They might have ruled and rectified her will;
" But they perceived not the bewilder'd mind,
" And show'd her paths, that she could never find:
" The weakness that was Nature's, they reproved,
" And all its comforts from the Heart removed.

" Ev'n in this state, she loved the winds that sweep
" O'er the wild heath, and curl the restless deep;
" A turf-built hut beneath a hill she chose,
" And oft at night in winter storms arose,
" Hearing, or dreaming, the distracted cry
" Of drowning seamen on the breakers by:
" For there were rocks, that when the tides were low
" Appear'd, and vanish'd when the waters flow;
" And there she stood, all patient to behold
" Some seaman's body on the billows roll'd.

" One calm, cold evening, when the moon was high,
" And rode sublime within the cloudless sky,

" She sat within her hut, nor seem'd to feel
" Or cold or want, but turn'd her idle wheel,
" And with sad song its melancholy tone
" Mix'd, all unconscious that she dwelt alone.

" But none will harm her — Or who, willing, can?
" She is too wretched to have fear of man —
" Not man! but something — if it should appear,
" That once was man — that something did she fear.

" No causeless terror! — In that moon's clear light
" It came, and seem'd a parley to invite;
" It was no hollow voice — no brushing by
" Of a strange being, who escapes the eye —
" No cold or thrilling touch, that will but last
" While we can think, and then for ever past.
" But this sad face — though not the same, she knew
" Enough the same, to prove the vision true —
" Look'd full upon her! — starting in affright
" She fled, her wildness doubling at the sight;
" With shrieks of terror, and emotion strong,
" She pass'd it by, and madly rush'd along
" To the bare rocks — While David, who, that day,
" Had left his ship at anchor in the bay,
" Had seen his friends who yet survived, and heard
" Of her who loved him — and who thus appear'd —
" He tried to soothe her, but retired afraid
" T' approach, and left her to return for aid.

" None came ! and Rachel in the morn was found
" Turning her wheel, without its spindles, round,
" With household look of care, low singing to the sound.

" Since that event, she is what you have seen,
" But time and habit make her more serene,
" The edge of anguish blunted — yet, it seems,
" Sea, ships, and sailors' miseries are her dreams."

TALE V.

VILLARS.

TALE V.

VILLARS.

Poet. — KNOW you the fate of Villars? —
Friend. — What! the lad
At school so fond of solitude, and sad;
Who broke our bounds because he scorn'd a guide,
And would walk lonely by the river's side?

P. — The same! — who rose at midnight to behold
The moonbeams shedding their ethereal gold;
Who held our sports and pleasures in disgrace,
For Guy of Warwick, and old Chevy Chase. —

F. — Who sought for friendships, gave his generous heart
To every boy who chose to act the part;
Or judged he felt it — not aware that boys
Have poor conceit of intellectual joys:
Theirs is no season for superfluous friends,
And none they need, but those whom Nature lends.

P. — But he, too, loved? —
F. — Oh! yes: his friend betray'd
The tender passion for the angel-maid.

Some child, whose features he at church had
seen,
Became his bosom's and his fancy's queen;
Some favourite look was on his mind impress'd —
His warm and fruitful fondness gave the rest.

P. — He left his father? —
F. — Yes! and rambled round
The land on foot — I know not what he found.
Early he came to his paternal land,
And took the course he had in rambling plann'd.
Ten years we lost him: he was then employ'd
In the wild schemes that he, perhaps, enjoy'd.
His mode of life, when he to manhood grew,
Was all his own — its shape disclosed to few.

Our grave, stern dames, who know the deeds of
all,
Say that some damsels owe to him their fall;
And, though a Christian in his creed profess'd,
He had some heathen notions in his breast.
Yet we may doubt; for women, in his eyes,
Were high and glorious, queens and deities;
But he, perhaps, adorer and yet man,
Transgress'd yet worshipp'd. There are those who
can.

Near him a Widow's mansion he survey'd —
The lovely mother of a lovelier Maid;
Not great their wealth; though they were proud to
claim
Alliance with a house of noblest name.

Now, had I skill, I would right fain devise
To bring the highborn spinster to your eyes.
I could discourse of lip, and chin, and cheek,
But you would see no picture as I speak.
Such colours cannot — mix them as I may —
Paint you this nymph — We 'll try a different way.

First take Calista in her glowing charms,
E'er yet she sank within Lothario's arms,
Endued with beauties ripe, and large desires,
And all that feels delight, and that inspires:
Add Cleopatra's great, yet tender soul,
Her boundless pride, her fondness of control,
Her daring spirit, and her wily art,
That, though it tortures, yet commands the heart;
Add woman's anger for a lover's slight,
And the revenge, that insult will excite;
Add looks for veils, that she at will could wear,
As Juliet fond, as Imogen sincere, —
Like Portia grave, sententious, and design'd
For high affairs, or gay as Rosalind —
Catch, if you can, some notion of the dame,
And let Matilda serve her for a name.

Think next how Villars saw th' enchanting maid,
And how he loved, pursued, adored, obey'd —
Obey'd in all, except the dire command,
No more to dream of that bewitching hand.
His love provoked her scorn, his wealth she spurn'd,
And frowns for praise, contempt for prayer return'd;
But, proud yet shrewd, the wily sex despise
The would-be husband — yet the votary prize.

As Roman conquerors, of their triumph vain,
Saw humbled monarchs in their pompous train,
Who, when no more they swell'd the show of pride,
In secret sorrow'd, or in silence died;
So, when our friend adored the Beauty's shrine,
She mark'd the act, and gave the nod divine;
And strove with scatter'd smiles, yet scarcely strove,
To keep the lover, while she scorn'd his love.

These, and his hope, the doubtful man sustain'd;
For who that loves believes himself disdain'd? —
Each look, each motion, by his fondness read,
Became Love's food, and greater fondness bred;
The pettiest favour was to him the sign,
Of secret love, and said, "I 'll yet be thine!"
One doleful year she held the captive swain,
Who felt and cursed, and wore and bless'd, the chain;
Who pass'd a thousand galling insults by,
For one kind glance of that ambiguous eye.

P. — Well! time, perhaps, might to the coldest heart
Some gentle thought of one so fond impart;
And pride itself has often favour shown
To what it governs, and can call its own.

F. — Thus were they placed, when to the village came
That lordly stranger, whom I need not name;
Known since too well, but then as rich and young,
Untried his prowess, and his crimes unsung.

Smooth was his speech, and show'd a gentle mind,
Deaf to his praise, and to his merits blind; [kind.
But raised by woman's smile, and pleased with all man-

At humble distance he this fair survey'd,
Read her high temper, yet adored the Maid;
Far off he gazed, as if afraid to meet,
Or show the hope her anger would defeat:
Awful his love, and kept a guarded way,
Afraid to venture, till it finds it may.
And soon it found! nor could the Lady's pride
Her triumph bury, or her pleasure hide.

And jealous Love, that ever looks to spy
The dreaded wandering of a lady's eye,
Perceived with anguish, that the prize long sought
A sudden rival from his hopes had caught.
Still Villars loved; at length, in strong despair,
O'er-tortured passion thus preferr'd its prayer: —
"Life of my life! at once my fate decree —
"I wait my death, or more than life, from thee:
"I have no arts, nor powers, thy soul to move,
"But doting constancy, and boundless love;
"This is my all: had I the world to give,
"Thine were its throne — now bid me die or live!"

"Or die or live" — the gentle Lady cried —
"As suits thee best; that point thyself decide.
"But if to death thou hast thyself decreed,
"Then like a man perform the manly deed;
"The well-charged pistol to the ear apply,
"Make loud report, and like a hero die:

" Let rogues and rats on ropes and poison seize —
" Shame not thy friends by petty death like these;
" Sure we must grieve at what thou think'st to do,
" But spare us blushes for the manner too!"

Then with inviting smiles she turn'd aside,
Allay'd his anger, and consoled his pride.

Oft had the fickle fair beheld with scorn
The unhappy man bewilder'd and forlorn,
Then with one softening glance of those bright eyes
Restored his spirit, and dispersed his sighs.
Oft had I seen him on the lea below,
As feelings moved him, walking quick or slow:
Now a glad thought, and now a doleful came,
And he adored or cursed the changeful dame,
Who was to him as cause is to effect —
Poor tool of pride, perverseness, and neglect!
Upon thy rival were her thoughts bestow'd,
Ambitious love within her bosom glow'd;
And oft she wish'd, and strong was her desire,
The Lord could love her like the faithful Squire;
But she was rivall'd in that noble breast —
He loved her passing well, but not the best,
For self reign'd there: but still he call'd her fair,
And woo'd the Muse his passion to declare.
His verses all were flaming, all were fine;
With sweetness, nay with sense, in every line —
Not as Lord Byron would have done the thing,
But better far than lords are used to sing.

It pleased the Maid, and she, in very truth,
Loved, in Calista's love, the noble youth;
Not like sweet Juliet, with that pure delight,
Fond and yet chaste, enraptur'd and yet right;
Not like the tender Imogen, confined
To one, but one! the true, the wedded mind;
True, one preferr'd our sighing nymph as these,
But thought not, like them, one alone could please.

Time pass'd, nor yet the youthful peer proposed
To end his suit, nor his had Villars closed;
Fond hints the one, the other cruel bore;
That was more cautious, this was kind the more:
Both for soft moments waited — that to take
Of these advantage; fairly this to make.
These moments came — or so my Lord believed —
He dropp'd his mask; and both were undeceived.
She saw the vice that would no longer feign,
And he an angry beauty's pure disdain.

Villars that night had in my ear confess'd,
He thought himself her spaniel and her jest.
He saw his rival of his goddess sure,
"But then," he cried, "her virtue is secure;
"Should he offend, I haply may obtain
"The high reward of vigilance and pain;
"Till then I take, and on my bended knee,
"Scraps from the banquet, gleanings of the tree."

Pitying, I smiled; for I had known the time
Of Love insulted — constancy my crime.

Not thus our friend: for him the morning shone,
In tenfold glory, as for him alone;
He wept, expecting still reproof to meet,
And all that was not cruel count as sweet.
Back he return'd, all eagerness and joy,
Proud as a prince, and restless as a boy.
He sought to speak, but could not aptly find
Words for his use, they enter'd not his mind;
So full of bliss, that wonder and delight
Seem'd in those happy moments to unite.
He was like one who gains, but dreads to lose,
A prize that seems to vanish as he views:
And in his look was wildness and alarm —
Like a sad conjuror who forgets his charm,
And, when the demon at the call appears,
Cannot command the spirit for his fears:
So Villars seem'd by his own bliss perplex'd,
And scarcely knowing what would happen next.

But soon, a witness to their vows, I saw
The maiden his, if not by love, by law;
The bells proclaim'd it — merry call'd by those
Who have no foresight of their neighbours' woes.
How proudly show'd the man his lovely bride,
Demurely pacing, pondering, at his side!
While all the loving maids around declared,
That faith and constancy deserved reward.
The baffled Lord retreated from the scene
Of so much gladness, with a world of spleen;

And left the wedded couple, to protest,
That he no fear, that she no love possess'd,
That all his vows were scorn'd, and all his hope a jest.

Then fell the oaks to let in light of day,
Then rose the mansion that we now survey,
Then all the world flock'd gaily to the scene
Of so much splendour, and its splendid queen;
But whether all within the gentle breast
Of him, of her, was happy or at rest, —
Whether no lonely sigh confess'd regret,
Was then unknown, and is a secret yet;
And we may think, in common duty bound,
That no complaint is made where none is found.

Then came the Rival to his villa down,
Lost to the pleasures of the heartless town;
Famous he grew, and he invited all
Whom he had known to banquet at the Hall;
Talk'd of his love, and said, with many a sigh,
" 'T is death to lose her, and I wish to die."

Twice met the parties; but with cool disdain
In her, in him with looks of awe and pain.
Villars had pity, and conceived it hard
That true regret should meet with no regard—
" Smile, my Matilda! virtue should inflict
" No needless pain, nor be so sternly strict."

The Hall was furnish'd in superior style,
And money wanted from our sister isle;

The lady-mother to the husband sued —
" Alas! that care should on our bliss intrude!
" You must to Ireland; our possessions there
" Require your presence, nay, demand your care.
" My pensive daughter begs with you to sail;
" But spare your wife, nor let the wish prevail."

He went, and found upon his Irish land
Cases and griefs he could not understand.
Some glimmering light at first his prospect cheer'd —
Clear it was not, but would in time be clear'd;
But when his lawyers had their efforts made,
No mind in man the darkness could pervade;
'T was palpably obscure: week after week
He sought for comfort, but was still to seek.
At length, impatient to return, he strove
No more with law, but gave the rein to love;
And to his Lady and their native shore
Vow'd to return, and thence to turn no more.

While yet on Irish ground in trouble kept,
The Husband's terrors in his toils had slept;
But he no sooner touch'd the British soil,
Than jealous terrors took the place of toil —
" Where has she been? and how attended? Who
" Has watch'd her conduct, and will vouch her true?
" She sigh'd at parting, but methought her sighs
" Were more profound than would from nature rise;
" And though she wept as never wife before,
" Yet were her eyelids neither swell'd nor sore.

" Her lady-mother has a good repute,
" As watchful dragon of forbidden fruit;
" Yet dragons sleep, and mothers have been known
" To guard a daughter's secret as their own;
" Nor can the absent in their travel see
" How a fond wife and mother may agree.

" Suppose the lady is most virtuous!—then,
" What can she know of the deceits of men?
" Of all they plan, she neither thinks nor cares;
" But keeps, good lady! at her books and prayers.

" In all her letters there are love, respect,
" Esteem, regret, affection, all correct—
" Too much—she fears that I should see neglect;
" And there are fond expressions, but unlike
" The rest, as meant to be observed and strike;
" Like quoted words, they have the show of art,
" And come not freely from the gentle heart—
" Adopted words, and brought from memory's store,
" When the chill faltering heart supplies no more:
" 'T is so the hypocrite pretends to feel,
" And speaks the words of earnestness and zeal.

" Hers was a sudden, though a sweet consent;
" May she not now as suddenly repent?
" My rival's vices drove him from her door;
" But hates she vice as truly as before?
" How do I know, if he should plead again,
" That all her scorn and anger would remain?

" Oh! words of folly—is it thus I deem
" Of the chaste object of my fond esteem?
" Away with doubt! to jealousy adieu!
" I know her fondness, and believe her true.

" Yet why that haste to furnish every need,
" And send me forth with comfort, and with speed?
" Yes; for she dreaded that the winter's rage
" And our frail hoy should on the seas engage.

" But that vile girl! I saw a treacherous eye
" Glance on her mistress! so demure and sly,
" So forward too—and would Matilda's pride
" Admit of that, if there was nought beside?"

Such, as he told me, were the doubt, the dread,
By jealous fears on observations fed.

Home he proceeded: there remain'd to him
But a few miles—the night was wet and dim;
Thick, heavy dews descended on the ground,
And all was sad and melancholy round.

While thinking thus, an inn's far gleaming fire
Caused new emotions in the pensive Squire.
" Here I may learn, and seeming careless too,
" If all is well, ere I my way pursue. [all?—
" How fare you, landlord?—how, my friend, are
" Have you not seen—my people at the Hall?
" Well, I may judge——"
" Oh! yes, your Honour, well,
" As Joseph knows; and he was sent to tell."—

" How! sent—I miss'd him—Joseph, do you say?
" Why sent, if well?—I miss'd him on the way."

There was a poacher on the chimney-seat,
A gipsy, conjuror, smuggler, stroller, cheat.
The Squire had fined him for a captured hare,
Whipp'd and imprison'd—he had felt the fare,
And he remember'd: " Will your Honour know
" How does my Lady? that myself can show.
" On Monday early —for your Honour sees
" The poor man must not slumber at his ease,
" Nor must he into woods and coverts lurk,
' Nor work alone, but must be seen to work:
" 'T is not, your Honour knows, sufficient now
" For us to live, but we must prove it—how.
" Stay, please your Honour,—I was early up,
" And forth without a morsel or a sup.
" There was my Lady's carriage — Whew! it drove
" As if the horses had been spurr'd by Love."

" A poet, John!" said Villars—feebly said,
Confused with fear, and humbled and dismay'd—
" And where this carriage?—but, my heart! enough—
" Why do I listen to the villain's stuff?—
" And where wert thou? and what the spur of thine,
" That led thee forth?—we surely may divine!"

" Hunger, your Honour! I and my poor wife
" Have now no other in our wane of life.
" Were Phœbe handsome, and were I a Squire,
" I might suspect her, and young Lords admire."—

"What! rascal ——" — "Nay, your Honour, on my word,
"I should be jealous of that fine young Lord;
"Yet him my Lady in the carriage took,
"But innocent — I 'd swear it on the book."

"You villain, swear!" — for still he wish'd to stay,
And hear what more the fellow had to say.
"Phœbe, said I, a rogue that had a heart
"To do the deed would make his Honour smart —
"Says Phœbe, wisely, 'Think you, would he go,
"'If he were jealous, from my Lady? — No.'"

This was too much! poor Villars left the inn,
To end the grief that did but then begin.
"With my Matilda in the coach! — what lies
"Will the vile rascal in his spleen devise?
"Yet this is true, that on some vile pretence
"Men may entrap the purest innocence.
"He saw my fears — alas! I am not free
"From every doubt — but, no! it cannot be."

Villars moved slow, moved quick, as check'd by fear,
Or urged by Love, and drew his mansion near.
Light burst upon him, yet he fancied gloom,
Nor came a twinkling from Matilda's room.
"What then? 'tis idle to expect that all
"Should be produced at jealous fancy's call;
"How! the park-gate wide open! who would dare
"Do this, if her presiding glance were there?

" But yet, by chance—I know not what to think,
" For thought is hell, and I 'm upon the brink!
" Not for a thousand worlds, ten thousand lives,
" Would I —— Oh! what depends upon our wives!
" Pains, labours, terrors, all would I endure,
" Yes, all but this—and this, could I be sure——"

Just then a light within the window shone,
And show'd a lady, weeping and alone.
His heart beat fondly—on another view,
It beat more strongly, and in terror too—
It was his Sister!—and there now appear'd
A servant creeping like a man that fear'd.
He spoke with terror—" Sir, did Joseph tell?
" Have you not met him?"—
" Is your Lady well?"
" Well? Sir—your Honour ——"
" Heaven and earth! what mean
" Your stupid questions? I have nothing seen,
" Nor heard, nor know, nor—Do, good Thomas, speak!
" Your mistress ——"
" Sir, has gone from home a week—
" My Lady, Sir, your sister ——"
But, too late
Was this—my Friend had yielded to his fate.
He heard the truth, became serene and mild,
Patient and still, as a corrected child;
At once his spirit with his fortune fell
To the last ebb, and whisper'd—It is well.

Such was his fall; and grievous the effect!
From henceforth all things fell into neglect —
The mind no more alert, the form no more erect.

Villars long since, as he indulged his spleen
By lonely travel on the coast, had seen
A large old mansion suffer'd to decay
In some law-strife, and slowly drop away.
Dark elms around the constant herons bred,
Those the marsh dykes, the neighbouring ocean, fed;
Rocks near the coast no shipping would allow,
And stubborn heath around forbad the plough;
Dull must the scene have been in years of old,
But now was wildly dismal to behold —
One level sadness! marsh, and heath, and sea,
And, save these high dark elms, nor plant nor tree.

In this bleak ruin Villars found a room,
Square, small, and lofty — seat of grief and gloom:
A sloping skylight on the white wall threw,
When the sun set, a melancholy hue;
The Hall of Vathek has a room so bare,
So small, so sad, so form'd to nourish care.
"Here," said the Traveller, "all so dark within,
"And dull without, a man might mourn for sin,
"Or punish sinners — here a wanton wife
"And vengeful husband might be cursed for life."

His mind was now in just that wretched state,
That deems Revenge our right, and crime our fate.
All other views he banish'd from his soul,
And let this tyrant vex him and control;

Life he despised, and had that Lord defied,
But that he long'd for Vengeance e'er he died.
The law he spurn'd, the combat he declined,
And to his purpose all his soul resign'd.

Full fifteen months had pass'd, and we began
To have some hope of the returning man;
Now to his steward of his small affairs
He wrote, and mention'd leases and repairs;
But yet his soul was on its scheme intent,
And but a moment to his interest lent.

His faithless wife and her triumphant peer
Despised his vengeance, and disdain'd to fear;
In splendid lodgings near the town they dwelt,
Nor fears from wrath, nor threats from conscience felt.

Long time our friend had watch'd, and much had paid
For vulgar minds, who lent his vengeance aid.
At length one evening, late returning home,
Thoughtless and fearless of the ills to come,
The Wife was seized, when void of all alarm,
And vainly trusting to a footman's arm;
Death in his hand, the Husband stood in view,
Commanding silence, and obedience too;
Forced to his carriage, sinking at his side,
Madly he drove her — Vengeance was his guide.

All in that ruin Villars had prepared,
And meant her fate and sorrow to have shared;

There he design'd they should for ever dwell,
The weeping pair of a monastic cell.

An ancient couple from their cottage went,
Won by his pay, to this imprisonment;
And all was order'd in his mind — the pain
He must inflict, the shame she must sustain;
But such his gentle spirit, such his love,
The proof might fail of all he meant to prove.

Features so dear had still maintain'd their sway,
And looks so loved had taught him to obey;
Rage and Revenge had yielded to the sight
Of charms that waken wonder and delight;
The harsher passions from the heart had flown,
And Love regain'd his Subject and his Throne.

TALE VI.

THE FAREWELL AND RETURN.

[The next Tale, and a number of others, were originally designed for a separate volume, to be entitled "The Farewell and Return." In a letter to Mrs. Leadbetter, written in 1823, the poet says — "In my 'Farewell and Return' I suppose a young man to take leave of his native place, and to exchange *farewells* with his friends and acquaintance there — in short, with as many characters as I have fancied I could manage. These, and their several situations and prospects, being briefly sketched, an interval is supposed to elapse; and our youth, a youth no more, *returns* to the scene of his early days. Twenty years have passed; and the interest, if there be any, consists in the completion, more or less unexpected, of the history of each person to whom he had originally bidden farewell."

The reader will find the Tales, written on this plan, divided each into two or more sections; and will easily perceive where the *farewell* terminates, and the *return* begins.]

TALE VI.

THE FAREWELL AND RETURN.

I.

I AM of age, and now, no more the Boy,
Am ready Fortune's favours to enjoy,
Were they, too, ready; but, with grief I speak,
Mine is the fortune that I yet must seek.
And let me seek it; there's the world around —
And if not sought it never can be found.
It will not come if I the chase decline;
Wishes and wants will never make it mine.
Then let me shake these lingering fears away;
What one day must be, let it be to-day;
Lest courage fail ere I the search commence,
And resolution pall upon suspense.

Yet, while amid these well-known scenes I dwell,
Let me to friends and neighbours bid Farewell.

First to our men of wealth — these are but few —
In duty bound I humbly bid adieu.
This is not painful, for they know me not,
Fortune in different states has placed our lot;

It is not pleasant, for full well I know
The lordly pity that the rich bestow—
A proud contemptuous pity, by whose aid
Their own triumphant virtues are display'd. —
" Going, you say ; and what intends the Lad,
" To seek his fortune? Fortune! is he mad?
" Has he the knowledge? is he duly taught?
" I think we know how Fortune should be sought.
" Perhaps he takes his chance to sink or swim,
" Perhaps he dreams of Fortune's seeking him?
" Life is his lottery, and away he flies,
" Without a ticket to obtain his prize :
" But never man acquired a weighty sum,
" Without foreseeing whence it was to come."

Fortunes are made, if I the facts may state,—
Though poor myself, I know the fortunate:
First, there 's a knowledge of the way from whence
Good fortune comes—and that is sterling sense;
Then perseverance, never to decline
The chase of riches till the prey is thine;
And firmness, never to be drawn away
By any passion from that noble prey—
By love, ambition, study, travel, fame,
Or the vain hope that lives upon a name.

The whistling Boy that holds the plough,
Lured by the tale that soldiers tell,
Resolves to part, yet knows not how
To leave the land he loves so well.

He now rejects the thought, and now
Looks o'er the lea, and sighs "Farewell!"

Farewell! the pensive Maiden cries,
Who dreams of London, dreams awake—
But when her favourite Lad she spies,
With whom she loved her way to take,
Then Doubts within her soul arise,
And equal Hopes her bosom shake!

Thus, like the Boy, and like the Maid,
I wish to go, yet tarry here,
And now resolved, and now afraid:
To minds disturb'd old views appear
In melancholy charms array'd,
And once indifferent, now are dear.
How shall I go, my fate to learn—
And, oh! how taught shall I return?

II.

Yes! — twenty years have pass'd, and I am come,
Unknown, unwelcomed, to my early home,
A stranger striving in my walks to trace
The youthful features in some aged face.
On as I move, some curious looks I read;
We pause a moment, doubt, and then proceed:
They're like what once I saw, but not the same,
I lose the air, the features, and the name.
Yet something seems like knowledge, but the change
Confuses me, and all in him is strange:

That bronzed old Sailor, with his wig awry—
Sure he will know me! No, he passes by.
They seem like me in doubt; but they can call
Their friends around them! I am lost to all.

The very place is alter'd. What I left
Seems of its space and dignity bereft:
The streets are narrow, and the buildings mean;
Did I, or Fancy, leave them broad and clean?
The ancient church, in which I felt a pride,
As struck by magic, is but half as wide;
The tower is shorter, the sonorous bell
Tells not the hour as it was wont to tell;
The market dwindles, every shop and stall
Sinks in my view; there's littleness in all.
Mine is the error; prepossess'd I see;
And all the change I mourn is change in me.

One object only is the same; the sight
Of the wide Ocean by the moon's pale light
With her long ray of glory, that we mark
On the wild waves when all beside is dark:
This is the work of Nature, and the eye
In vain the boundless prospect would descry:
What mocks our view cannot contracted be;
We cannot lessen what we cannot see.

Would I could now a single Friend behold,
Who would the yet mysterious facts unfold,
That Time yet spares, and to a stranger show
Th' events he wishes, and yet fears to know!

Much by myself I might in listening glean,
Mix'd with the crowd, unmark'd if not unseen,
Uninterrupted I might ramble on,
Nor cause an interest, nor a thought, in one;
For who looks backward to a being tost
About the world, forgotten long, and lost,
For whom departing not a tear was shed,
Who disappear'd, was missing, and was dead!
Save that he left no grave, where some might pass,
And ask each other who that being was.

I, as a ghost invisible, can stray
Among the crowd, and cannot lose my way;
My ways are where the voice of man is known,
Though no occasion offers for my own;
My eager mind to fill with food I seek,
And, like the ghost, await for one to speak.

See I not One whom I before have seen?
That face, though now untroubled and serene,
That air, though steady now, that look, though tame,
Pertain to one, whom though I doubt to name,
Yet was he not a dashing youth and wild,
Proud as a man, and haughty when a child?
Talents were his; he was in nature kind,
With lofty, strong, and independent mind;
His father wealthy, but, in very truth,
He was a rash, untamed, expensive youth;
And, as I now remember the report,
Told how his father's money he would sport:

Yet in his dress and manner now appears
No sign of faults that stain'd his earlier years;
Mildness there seems, and marks of sober sense,
That bear no token of that wild expense
Such as to ruin leads!—I may mistake,
Yet may, perchance, a useful friendship make!
He looks as one whom I should not offend,
Address'd as him whom I would make a friend.

Men with respect attend him.—He proceeds
To yonder public room—why then he reads.

Suppose me right—a mighty change is wrought;
But Time ere now has care and caution taught.
May I address him? And yet, why afraid?
Deny he may, but he will not upbraid,
Nor must I lose him, for I want his aid.

Propitious fate! beyond my hope I find
A being well-inform'd, and much inclined
To solve my many doubts, and ease my anxious mind.

Now shall we meet, and he will give reply
To all I ask!—How full of fears am I;
Poor, nervous, trembling! what have I to fear?
Have I a wife, a child, one creature here,
Whose health would bring me joy, whose death would claim a tear?

This is the time appointed, this the place:
Now shall I learn, how some have run their race

With honour, some with shame; and I shall know
How man behaves in Fortune's ebb and flow;—
What wealth or want, what trouble, sorrow, joy,
Have been allotted to the girls and boy
Whom I left laughing at the ills of life,—
Now the grave father, or the awful wife.
Then shall I hear how tried the wise and good!
How fall'n the house that once in honour stood!
And moving accidents, from war and fire and flood!

These shall I hear, if to his promíse true;
His word is pledged to tell me all he knew
Of living men; and memory then will trace
Those who no more with living men have place,
As they were borne to their last quiet homes—
This shall I learn! — And lo! my Teacher comes.

TALE VII.

THE SCHOOL-FELLOW.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE VII.

THE SCHOOL-FELLOW.

I.

Yes! I must leave thee, brother of my heart,
The world demands us, and at length we part;
Thou whom that heart, since first it felt, approved—
I thought not why, nor question'd how I loved;
In my first thoughts, first notions, and first cares,
Associate: partner in my mind's affairs,
In my young dreams, my fancies ill-express'd
But well conceived, and to the heart address'd.
A fellow-reader in the books I read,
A fellow-mourner in the tears I shed,
A friend, partaking every grief and joy,
A lively, frank, engaging, generous boy.

At school each other's prompters, day by day
Companions in the frolic or the fray;
Prompt in disputes—we never sought the cause,
The laws of friendship were our only laws;
We ask'd not how or why the strife began,
But David's foe was foe to Jonathan.

In after-years my Friend, the elder boy,
Would speak of Love, its tumult and its joy;
A new and strong emotion thus imprest,
Prepared for pain to come the yielding breast;
For though no object then the fancy found,
She dreamt of darts, and gloried at the wound;
Smooth verse and tender tales the spirit moved,
And ere the Chloes came the Strephons loved.

This is the Friend I leave; for he remains
Bound to his home by strong but viewless chains:
Nor need I fear that his aspiring soul
Will fail his adverse fortunes to controul,
Or lose the fame he merits: yet awhile
The clouds may lour—but then his sun will smile.
Oh! Time, thou teller of men's fortunes, lend
Thy aid, and be propitious to my Friend!
Let me behold him prosperous, and his name
Enroll'd among the darling sons of Fame;
In love befriend him, and be his the bride,
Proud of her choice, and of her lord the pride.
"So shall my little bark attendant sail,"—
(As Pope has sung)—and prosperous be the gale!

II.

He is not here: the Youth I loved so well
Dwells in some place where kindred spirits dwell:
But I shall learn. Oh! tell me of my Friend,
With whom I hoped life's evening-calm to spend;

With whom was spent the morn, the happy morn!
When gay conceits and glorious views are born;
With whom conversing I began to find
The early stirrings of an active mind,
That, done the tasks and lessons of the day,
Sought for new pleasures in our untried way;
And stray'd in fairy land, where much we long'd
to stray.

Here he abides not! could not surely fix
In this dull place, with these dull souls to mix;
He finds his place where lively spirits meet,
And loftier souls from baser kind retreat.

First, of my early Friend I gave the name,
Well known to me, and, as I judged, to Fame;
My grave informer doubted, then replied, [died."
"That Lad!—why, yes!—some ten years since he

P.—Died! and unknown! the man I loved so well!
But is this all? the whole that you can tell
Of one so gifted?—
F.—Gifted! why, in truth,
You puzzle me; how gifted was the Youth?
I recollect him, now—his long, pale face—
He dress'd in drab, and walk'd as in a race.

P.—Good Heaven! what did I not of him expect?
And is this all indeed you recollect—
Of wit that charm'd me, with delightful ease—
And gay good-humour that must ever please—
His taste, his genius! know you nought of these?

F.—No, not of these:—but stop! in passing near,
I've heard his flute—it was not much to hear:
As for his genius—let me not offend:
I never had a genius for a friend,
And doubt of yours; but still he did his best,
And was a decent Lad—there let him rest!

He lies in peace, with all his humble race,
And has no stone to mark his burial place;
Nor left he that which to the world might show
That he was one that world was bound to know,
For aught he gave it.—Here his story ends!

P.—And is this all? This character my Friend's!
That may, alas! be mine—— "*a decent Lad!*"—
The very phrase would make a Poet mad!
And he is gone!—Oh! proudly did I think
That we together at that fount should drink,
Together climb the steep ascent of Fame,
Together gain an ever-during name,
And give due credit to our native home—
Yet here he lies, without a name or tomb!
Perhaps not honour'd by a single tear,
Just enter'd in a parish-register,
With common dust, forgotten to remain—
And shall I seek, what thou could'st not obtain—
A name for men when I am dead to speak?—
Oh! let me something more substantial seek;
Let me no more on man's poor praise depend,
But learn one lesson from my buried Friend.

TALE VIII.

BARNABY; THE SHOPMAN.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE VIII.

BARNABY; THE SHOPMAN.

I.

FAREWELL! to *him* whom just across my way,
I see his shop attending day by day;
Save on the Sunday, when he duly goes
To his own church, in his own Sunday clothes.
Young though he is, yet careful there he stands,
Opening his shop with his own ready hands;
Nor scorns the broom that to and fro he moves,
Cleaning his way, for cleanliness he loves—
But yet preserves not: in his zeal for trade
He has his shop an ark for all things made;
And there, in spite of his all-guarding eye,
His sundry wares in strange confusion lie—
Delightful token of the haste that keeps
Those mingled matters in their shapeless heaps;
Yet ere he rests, he takes them all away,
And order smiles on the returning day.

Most ready tradesman he of men! alive
To all that turns to money — he must thrive.
Obsequious, civil, loath t' offend or trust,
And full of awe for greatness — thrive he must;
For well he knows to creep, and he in time,
By wealth assisted, will aspire to climb.

Pains-taking lad he was, and with his slate
For hours in useful meditation sate;
Puzzled, and seizing every boy at hand,
To make him — hard the labour! — understand:
But when of learning he enough possess'd
For his affairs, who would might learn the rest;
All else was useless when he had obtain'd
Knowledge that told him what he lost or gain'd:
He envied no man for his learning; he
Who was not rich, was poor with BARNABY:
But he for envy has no thought to spare,
Nor love nor hate — his heart is in his ware.

Happy the man whose greatest pleasure lies
In the fair trade by which he hopes to rise.
To him how bright the opening day, how blest
The busy noon, how sweet the evening rest!
To him the nation's state is all unknown,
Whose watchful eye is ever on his own.
You talk of patriots, men who give up all,
Yea, life itself, at their dear country's call!
He look'd on such as men of other date,
Men to admire, and not to imitate;
They as his Bible-Saints to him appear'd,
Lost to the world, but still to be revered.

Yet there 's a Widow, in a neighbouring street,
Whom he contrives in Sunday-dress to meet;
Her's house and land; and these are more delight
To him than learning, in the proverb's spite.

The Widow sees at once the Trader's views,
And means to soothe him, flatter, and refuse:
Yet there are moments when a woman fails
In such design, and so the man prevails.
Love she has not, but, in a guardless hour,
May lose her purpose, and resign her power;
Yet all such hazard she resolves to run,
Pleased to be woo'd, and fearless to be won.

Lovers like these, as dresses thrown aside,
Are kept and shown to feed a woman's pride.
Old-fashion'd, ugly, call them what she will,
They serve as signs of her importance still.
She thinks they might inferior forms adorn,
And does not love to hear them used with scorn;
Till on some day when she has need of dress,
And none at hand to serve her in distress,
She takes th' insulted robe, and turns about;
Long-hidden beauties one by one peer out.
" 'T is not so bad! see, Jenny—I declare
" 'T is pretty well, and then 't is lasting wear;
" And what is fashion?—if a woman's wise,
" She will the substance, not the shadow, prize;
" 'T is a choice silk, and if I put it on,
" Off go these ugly trappings every one."

The dress is worn, a friendly smile is raised,
But the good lady for her courage praised —
Till wonder dies. — The dress is worn with pride,
And not one trapping yet is cast aside.

Meanwhile the man his six-day toil renews,
And on the seventh he worships Heav'n, and woos.

I leave thee, Barnaby; and if I see
Thee once again, a Burgess thou wilt be.

II.

But how is this? I left a thriving man,
Hight Barnaby! when he to trade began —
Trade his delight and hope; and, if alive,
Doubt I had none that Barnaby would thrive:
Yet here I see him, sweeping as before
The very dust from forth the very door.
So would a miser! but, methinks, the shop
Itself is meaner — has he made a stop?

I thought I should at least a burgess see,
And lo! 't is but an older Barnaby;
With face more wrinkled, with a coat as bare
As coats of his once begging kindred were,
Brush'd to the thread that is distinctly seen,
And beggarly would be, but that 't is clean.

Why, how is this? Upon a closer view,
The shop is narrow'd: it is cut in two.

Is all that business from its station fled?
Why, Barnaby! thy very shop is dead!
Now, what the cause my Friend will soon relate—
And what the fall from that predicted fate.

F. A common cause: it seems his lawful gains
Came slowly forth, and came with care and pains.
These he, indeed, was willing to bestow,
But still his progress to his point was slow,
And might be quicken'd, "could he cheat the eyes
"Of all those rascal officers and spies, [cise."
"The Customs' greedy tribe, the wolves of the Ex-

Tea, coffee, spirits, laces, silks, and spice,
And sundry drugs that bear a noble price,
Are bought for little, but ere sold, the things
Are deeply charged for duty of the king's.
Now, if the servants of this king would keep
At a kind distance, or would wink or sleep,
Just till the goods in safety were disposed,
Why then his labours would be quickly closed.
True! some have thriven,—but they the laws defied,
And shunn'd the powers they should have satisfied!

Their way he tried, and finding some success,
His heart grew stouter, and his caution less;
Then—for why doubt, when placed in Fortune's way?—
There was a bank, and that was sure to pay.
Yes, every partner in that thriving bank
He judged a man of a superior rank.

Were *he* but one in a concern so grand—
Why! he might build a house, and buy him land;
Then, too, the Widow, whom he loved so well,
Would not refuse with such a man to dwell;
And, to complete his views, he might be made
A Borough-Justice, when he ceased to trade;
For he had known—well pleased to know—a mayor
Who once had dealt in cheese and vinegar.

Who hastens to be rich, resembles him
Who is resolved that he will quickly swim,
And trusts his full-blown bladders! He, indeed,
With these supported, moves along with speed;
He laughs at those whom untried depths alarm,
By caution led, and moved by strength of arm;
Till in mid-way, the way his folly chose,
His full-blown bladder bursts, and down he goes!
Or, if preserved, 't is by their friendly aid
Whom he despised as cautious and afraid.

Who could resist? Not Barnaby. Success
Awhile his pride exalted—to depress.
Three years he pass'd in feverish hopes and fears,
When fled the profits of the former years;
Shook by the Law's strong arm, all he had gain'd
He dropp'd—and hopeless, pennyless remain'd.

The cruel Widow, whom he yet pursued,
Was kind but cautious, then was stern and rude.
"Should wealth, now hers, from that dear man
which came,
"Be thrown away to prop a smuggler's fame?"

She spake insulting; and with many a sigh,
The fallen Trader passed her mansion by.

Fear, shame, and sorrow, for a time endured,
Th' adventurous man was ruin'd, but was cured —
His weakness pitied, and his once-good name
The means of his returning peace became.

He was assisted, to his shop withdrew,
Half let, half rented, and began anew,
To smile on custom, that in part return'd,
With the small gains that he no longer spurn'd.
Warn'd by the past, he rises with the day,
And tries to sweep off sorrow. —— *Sweep away!*

TALE IX.

JANE.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE IX.

JANE.

I.

Known but of late, I yet am loth to leave
The gentle Jane, and wonder why I grieve —
Not for her wants, for she has no distress,
She has no suffering that her looks express,
Her air or manner — hers the mild good sense
That wins its way by making no pretence.

When yet a child, her dying mother knew
What, left by her, the widow'd man would do,
And gave her Jane, for she had power, enough
To live in ease — of love and care a proof.
Enabled thus, the maid is kind to all —
Is pious too, and that without a call.
Not that she doubts of calls that Heav'n has sent—
Calls to believe, or warnings to repent;
But that she rests upon the Word divine,
Without presuming on a dubious sign;
A sudden light, the momentary zeal
Of those who rashly hope, and warmly feel;

These she rejects not, nor on these relies,
And neither feels the influence nor denies.
Upon the sure and written Word she trusts,
And by the Law Divine her life adjusts;
She blames not her who other creed prefers,
And all she asks is charity for hers.
Her great example is her gracious Lord,
Her hope his promise, and her guide his Word;
Her quiet alms are known to God alone,
Her left hand knows not what her right has done;
Her talents, not the few, she well improves,
And puts to use in labour that she loves.

Pensive, though good, I leave thee, gentle maid —
In thee confiding, of thy peace afraid,
In a strange world to act a trying part,
With a soft temper, and a yielding heart!

II.

P. — How fares my gentle Jane, with spirit meek,
Whose fate with some foreboding care I seek;
Her whom I pitied in my pride, while she,
For many a cause more weighty, pitied me;
For she has wonder'd how the idle boy
His head or hands would usefully employ —
At least for thee his grateful spirit pray'd,
And now to ask thy fortune is afraid. —
—— How fares the gentle Jane? —

F. — Know first, she fares
As one who bade adieu to earthly cares;
As one by virtue guided, and who, tried
By man's deceit, has never lost her guide.

Her age I knew not, but it seem'd the age
When Love is wont a serious war to wage
In female hearts, — when hopes and fears are strong,
And 't is a fatal step to place them wrong;
For childish fancies now have ta'en their flight,
And love's impressions are no longer light.

Just at this time — what time I do not tell —
There came a Stranger in the place to dwell;
He seem'd as one who sacred truth reveres,
And like her own his sentiments and years;
His person manly, with engaging mien,
His spirit quiet, and his looks serene.
He kept from all disgraceful deeds aloof,
Severely tried, and found temptation-proof:
This was by most unquestion'd, and the few
Who made inquiry said report was true.

His very choice of our neglected place
Endear'd him to us — 't was an act of grace;
And soon to Jane, our unobtrusive maid,
In still respect was his attention paid;
Each in the other found what both approved,
Good sense and quiet manners: these they loved.

So came regard, and then esteem, and then
The kind of friendship women have with men:

At length t'was love, but candid, open, fair,
Such as became their years and character.

In their discourse, religion had its place,
When he of doctrines talked, and she of grace.
He knew the different sects, the varying creeds,
While she, less learned, spake of virtuous deeds;
He dwelt on errors into which we fall,
She on the gracious remedy for all;
So between both, his knowledge and her own,
Was the whole Christian to perfection shown.
Though neither quite approved the other's part —
Hers without learning, his without a heart —
Still to each other they were dear, were good,
And all these matters kindly understood;
For Jane was liberal, and her friend could trust, —
"He thinks not with me! but is fair and just."

Her prudent lover to her man of law,
Show'd how he lived: it seem'd without a flaw;
She saw their moderate means — content with what
she saw.

Jane had no doubts — with so much to admire,
She judged it insult farther to inquire.
The lover sought — what lover brooks delay? —
For full assent, and for an early day —
And he would construe well the soft consenting
Nay!

The day was near, and Jane, with book in hand,
Sat down to read — perhaps might understand:

For what prevented?—say, she seem'd to read;
When one there came, her own sad cause to plead;
A stranger she, who fearless named that cause,
A breach in love's and honour's sacred laws.

"In a far country, Lady, bleak and wild,
"Report has reach'd me! how art thou beguiled!
"Or dared he tell thee that for ten sad years
"He saw me struggling with fond hopes and fears?

"From my dear home he won me, blest and free!
"To be his victim."—— "Madam, who is *he?*"
"Not yet thy husband, Lady: no! not yet;
"For he has first to pay a mighty debt."

"Speaks he not of religion?"—"So he speaks,
"When he the ruin of his victim seeks. [sweet—
"How smooth and gracious were his words, how
"The fiend his master prompting his deceit!
"Me he with kind instruction led to trust
"In one who seem'd so grave, so kind, so just.
"Books to amuse me, and inform, he brought,
"Like that old serpent with temptation fraught;
"His like the precepts of the wise appear'd,
"Till I imbibed the vice I had not fear'd.
"By pleasant tales and dissertations gay,
"He wiled the lessons of my youth away.

"Of moral duties he would talk, and prove
"They gave a sanction, and commanded love;
"His sober smile at forms and rites was shown,
"To make my mind depraved, and like his own.

" But wilt thou take him? wilt thou ruin take,
" With a grave robber, a religious rake?
" 'Tis not to serve thee, Lady, that I came —
" 'T is not to claim him, 'tis not to reclaim —
" But 't is that he may for my wrongs be paid,
" And feel the vengeance of the wretch he made.

" Not for myself I thy attention claim:
" My children dare not take their father's name;
" They know no parent's love — love will not dwell
with shame.
" What law would force, he not without it gives,
" And hates each living wretch, because it lives!
" Yet, with these sinful stains, the man is mine:
" How will he curse me for this rash design!
" Yes — I will bear his curse, but him will not resign.

" I see thee grieved; but, Lady, what thy grief?
" It may be pungent, but it must be brief.
" Pious thou art; but what will profit thee,
" Match'd with a demon, woman's piety?
" Not for thy sake my wrongs and wrath I tell,
" Revenge I seek! but yet, I wish thee well.
" And now I leave thee! Thou art warn'd by one,
" The rock on which her peace was wreck'd to shun."

The Lover heard; but not in time to stay
A woman's vengeance in its headlong way:
Yet he essay'd, with no unpractised skill,
To warp the judgment, or at least the will;
To raise such tumults in the poor weak heart,
That Jane, believing all — yet should not dare to part.

But there was Virtue in her mind that strove
With all his eloquence, and all her love;
He told what hope and frailty dared to tell,
And all was answered by a stern *Farewell!*

Home with his consort he return'd once more;
And they resumed the life they led before.
Not so our maiden. She, before resign'd,
Had now the anguish of a wounded mind —
And felt the languid grief that the deserted find:
On him she had reposed each worldly view,
And when he fail'd, the world itself withdrew.
With all its prospects. Nothing could restore
To life its value; hope would live no more:
Pensive by nature, she can not sustain
The sneer of pity that the heartless feign;
But to the pressure of her griefs gives way,
A quiet victim, and a patient prey:
The one bright view that she had cherish'd dies,
And other hope must from the future rise.

She still extends to grief and want her aid,
And by the comfort she imparts, is paid:
Death is her soul's relief: to him she flies
For consolation that this world denies.
No more to life's false promises she clings,
She longs to change this troubled state of things,
Till every rising morn the happier prospect brings.

TALE X.

THE ANCIENT MANSION.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE X.

THE ANCIENT MANSION.

I.

To part is painful; nay, to bid adieu
Ev'n to a favourite spot is painful too.
That fine old Seat, with all those oaks around,
Oft have I view'd with reverence so profound,
As something sacred dwelt in that delicious ground.

There, with its tenantry about, reside
A genuine English race, the country's pride;
And now a Lady, last of all that race,
Is the departing spirit of the place.
Hers is the last of all that noble blood,
That flow'd through generations brave and good;
And if there dwells a native pride in her,
It is the pride of name and character.

True, she will speak, in her abundant zeal,
Of stainless honour; that she needs must feel;
She must lament, that she is now the last
Of all who gave such splendour to the past.

Still are her habits of the ancient kind;
She knows the poor, the sick, the lame, the blind:
She holds, so she believes, her wealth in trust;
And being kind, with her, is being just.
Though soul and body she delights to aid,
Yet of her skill she's prudently afraid:
So to her chaplain's care she *this* commends,
And when *that* craves, the village doctor sends.

At church attendance she requires of all,
Who would be held in credit at the Hall;
A due respect to each degree she shows,
And pays the debt that every mortal owes;
'Tis by opinion that respect is led,
The rich esteem because the poor are fed.

Her servants all, if so we may describe
That ancient, grave, observant, decent tribe,
Who with her share the blessings of the Hall,
Are kind but grave, are proud but courteous all —
Proud of their lucky lot! behold, how stands
That grey-haired butler, waiting her commands;
The Lady dines, and every day he feels
That his good mistress falters in her meals.
With what respectful manners he intreats
That she would eat—yet Jacob little eats;
When she forbears, his supplicating eye
Intreats the noble dame once more to try.
Their years the same; and he has never known
Another place; and this he deems his own,—
All appertains to him. Whate'er he sees [trees!"
Is *ours!*—"our house, our land, our walks, our

But still he fears the time is just at hand,
When he no more shall in that presence stand;
And he resolves, with mingled grief and pride,
To serve no being in the world beside.
" He has enough," he says, with many a sigh,
" For him to serve his God, and learn to die:
" He and his lady shall have heard their call,
" And the new folk, the strangers, may have all."

But, leaving these to their accustom'd way,
The Seat itself demands a short delay.
We all have interest there—the trees that grow
Near to that seat, to that their grandeur owe;
They take, but largely pay, and equal grace bestow:
They hide a part, but still the part they shade
Is more inviting to our fancy made;
And, if the eye be robb'd of half its sight,
Th' imagination feels the more delight.
These giant oaks by no man's order stand,
Heaven did the work; by no man was it plann'd.

Here I behold no puny works of art,
None give me reasons why these views impart
Such charm to fill the mind, such joy to swell the heart.
These very pinnacles, and turrets small,
And windows dim, have beauty in them all.
How stately stand yon pines upon the hill,
How soft the murmurs of that living rill,
And o'er the park's tall paling, scarcely higher,
Peeps the low Church and shows the modest spire.

Unnumber'd violets on those banks appear,
And all the first-born beauties of the year.
The grey-green blossoms of the willows bring
The large wild bees upon the labouring wing.
Then comes the Summer with augmented pride,
Whose pure small streams along the valleys glide:
Her richer Flora their brief charms display;
And, as the fruit advances, fall away.
Then shall th' autumnal yellow clothe the leaf,
What time the reaper binds the burden'd sheaf:
Then silent groves denote the dying year,
The morning frost, and noon-tide gossamer;
And all be silent in the scene around,
All save the distant sea's uncertain sound,
Or here and there the gun whose loud report
Proclaims to man that Death is but his sport:
And then the wintry winds begin to blow,
Then fall the flaky stars of gathering snow,
When on the thorn the ripening sloe, yet blue,
Takes the bright varnish of the morning dew;
The aged moss grows brittle on the pale,
The dry boughs splinter in the windy gale,
And every changing season of the year
Stamps on the scene its English character.

Farewell! a prouder Mansion I may see,
But much must meet in that which equals thee!

II.

I LEAVE the town, and take a well-known way,
To that old Mansion in the closing day,
When beams of golden light are shed around,
And sweet is every sight and every sound.
Pass but this hill, and I shall then behold
The Seat so honour'd, so admired of old,
And yet admired———

Alas! I see a change,
Of odious kind, and lamentably strange.
Who had done this? The good old Lady lies
Within her tomb: but, who could this advise?
What barbarous hand could all this mischief do,
And spoil a noble house to make it new?
Who had done this? Some genuine Son of Trade
Has all this dreadful devastation made;
Some man with line and rule, and evil eye,
Who could no beauty in a tree descry,
Save in a clump, when stationed by his hand,
And standing where his genius bade them stand;
Some true admirer of the time's reform,
Who strips an ancient dwelling like a storm,
Strips it of all its dignity and grace,
To put his own dear fancies in their place.
He hates concealment: all that was enclosed
By venerable wood, is now exposed,
And a few stripling elms and oaks appear,
Fenced round by boards, to keep them from the deer.

I miss the grandeur of the rich old scene,
And see not what these clumps and patches mean!
This shrubby belt that runs the land around
Shuts freedom out! what being likes a bound?
The shrubs indeed, and ill-placed flowers, are gay,
And some would praise; I wish they were away,
That in the wild-wood maze I as of old might stray.
The things themselves are pleasant to behold,
But not like those which we beheld of old, —
That half-hid mansion, with its wide domain,
Unbound and unsubdued! — but sighs are vain;
It is the rage of Taste — the rule and compass reign.

As thus my spleen upon the view I fed,
A man approach'd me, by his grandchild led —
A blind old man, and she a fair young maid,
Listening in love to what her grandsire said.

And thus with gentle voice he spoke —
" Come lead me, lassie, to the shade,
" Where willows grow beside the brook;
" For well I know the sound it made,
" When dashing o'er the stony rill,
" It murmur'd to St. Osyth's Mill."

The Lass replied — " The trees are fled,
" They 've cut the brook a straighter bed:
" No shades the present lords allow,
" The miller only murmurs now;
" The waters now his mill forsake,
" And form a pond they call a lake."

" Then, lassie, lead thy grandsire on,
" And to the holy water bring ;
" A cup is fasten'd to the stone,
" And I would taste the healing spring,
" That soon its rocky cist forsakes,
" And green its mossy passage makes."

" The holy spring is turn'd aside,
" The rock is gone, the stream is dried ;
" The plough has levell'd all around,
" And here is now no holy ground."

" Then, lass, thy grandsire's footsteps guide,
" To Bulmer's Tree, the giant oak,
" Whose boughs the keeper's cottage hide,
" And part the church-way lane o'erlook ;
" A boy, I climb'd the topmost bough,
" And I would feel its shadow now.

" Or, lassie, lead me to the west,
" Where grew the elm-trees thick and tall,
" Where rooks unnumber'd build their nest —
" Deliberate birds, and prudent all :
" Their notes, indeed, are harsh and rude,
" But they're a social multitude. "

" The rooks are shot, the trees are fell'd,
" And nest and nursery all expell'd ;
" With better fate the giant-tree,
" Old Bulmer's Oak, is gone to sea.
" The church-way walk is now no more,
" And men must other ways explore :

" Though this indeed promotion gains,
" For this the park's new wall contains;
" And here I fear we shall not meet
" A shade—although, perchance, a seat."

" O then, my lassie, lead the way
" To Comfort's Home, the ancient inn:
" That something holds, if we can pay—
" Old David is our living kin;
" A servant once, he still preserves
" His name, and in his office serves."

" Alas! that mine should be the fate
" Old David's sorrows to relate:
" But they were brief; not long before
" He died, his office was no more.
" The kennel stands upon the ground,
" With something of the former sound."

" O then," the grieving Man replied,
" No further, lassie, let me stray;
" Here 's nothing left of ancient pride,
" Of what was grand, of what was gay:
" But all is chang'd, is lost, is sold—
" All, all that 's left is chilling cold.
" I seek for comfort here in vain,
" Then lead me to my cot again."

TALE XI.

THE MERCHANT.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XI.

THE MERCHANT.

I.

Lo! one appears, to whom if I should dare
To say *farewell*, the lordly man would stare,
Would stretch his goodly form some inches higher,
And then, without a single word, retire;
Or from his state might haply condescend
To doubt his memory—"Ha! your name, my friend!"

He is the master of these things we see,
Those vessels proudly riding by the quay;
With all those mountain heaps of coal that lie,
For half a county's wonder and supply.
Boats, cables, anchors, all to him pertain,—
A swimming fortune, all his father's gain.
He was a porter on the quay, and one
Proud of his fortune, prouder of his son;—

Who was ashamed of him, and much distress'd
To see his father was no better dress'd.
Yet for this parent did the son erect
A tomb—'tis whisper'd, he must not expect
The like for him, when he shall near it sleep,—
Where we behold the marble cherubs weep.

There are no merchants who with us reside
In half his state,—no wonder he has pride;
Then he parades around that vast estate,
As if he spurn'd the slaves that make him great;
Speaking in tone so high, as if the ware
Was nothing worth—at least not worth his care;
Yet should he not these bulky stores contemn,
For all his glory he derives from them;
And were it not for that neglected store,
This great rich man would be extremely poor.

Generous, men call him, for he deigns to give;
He condescends to say the poor must live:
Yet in his seamen not a sign appears,
That they have much respect, or many fears;
With inattention they their patron meet,
As if they thought his dignity a cheat;
Or of himself as, having much to do
With their affairs, he very little knew;
As if his ways to them so well were known,
That they might hear, and bow, and take their own.

He might contempt for men so humble feel,
But this experience taught him to conceal;

For sailors do not to a lord at land
As to their captain in submission stand;
Nor have mere pomp and pride of look or speech,
Been able yet respect or awe to teach.

Guns, when with powder charged, will make a noise,
To frighten babes, and be the sport of boys;
But when within men find there's nothing more,
They shout contemptuous at the idle roar.
Thus will our lofty man to all appear,
With nothing charged that they respect or fear.

His Lady, too, to her large purse applies,
And all she fancies at the instant buys.
How bows the market, when, from stall to stall,
She walks attended! how respectful all!
To her free orders every maid attends,
And strangers wonder what the woman spends.

There is an auction, and the people shy,
Are loth to bid, and yet desire to buy.
Jealous they gaze with mingled hope and fear,
Of buying cheaply, and of paying dear.
They see the hammer with determined air
Seized for despatch, and bid in pure despair!
They bid — the hand is quiet as before, —
Still stands old Puff till one advances more. —
Behold great madam, gliding through the crowd:
Hear her too bid — decisive tone and loud!
"Going! 'tis gone!" the hammer-holder cries —
"Joy to you, Lady! you have gain'd a prize."

Thus comes and goes the wealth, that, saved or spent,
Buys not a moment's credit or content.

Farewell! your fortune I forbear to guess;
For chance, as well as sense, may give success.

II.

P.— Say, what yon buildings, neat indeed, but low,
So much alike, in one commodious row?

F.— You see our Alms-house: ancient men, decay'd,
Are here sustain'd, who lost their way in trade;
Here they have all that sober men require—
So thought the Poet—"meat, and clothes, and fire;"
A little garden to each house pertains,
Convenient each, and kept with little pains.
Here for the sick are nurse and medicine found;
Here walks and shaded alleys for the sound;
Books of devotion on the shelves are placed,
And not forbidden are the books of taste.
The Church is near them—in a common seat
The pious men with grateful spirit meet:
Thus from the world, which they no more admire,
They all in silent gratitude retire.

P.—And is it so? Have all, with grateful mind,
The world relinquish'd, and its ways resign'd?

Look they not back with lingering love and slow,
And fain would once again the oft-tried follies know?

F.—Too surely some! We must not think that all,
Call'd to be hermits, would obey the call;
We must not think that all forget the state
In which they moved, and bless their humbler fate;
But all may here the waste of life retrieve,
And, ere they leave the world, its vices leave.

See yonder man, who walks apart, and seems
Wrapt in some fond and visionary schemes;
Who looks uneasy, as a man oppress'd
By that large copper badge upon his breast.
His painful shame, his self-tormenting pride,
Would all that's visible in bounty hide;
And much his anxious breast is swell'd with woe,
That where he goes his badge must with him go.

P.—Who then is he? Do I behold aright?
My lofty Merchant in this humble plight!
Still has he pride?

F.—— If common fame be just,
He yet has pride,—the pride that licks the dust;
Pride that can stoop, and feed upon the base
And wretched flattery of this humbling place;
Nay, feeds himself! his failing is avow'd,
He of the cause that made him poor is proud;
Proud of his greatness, of the sums he spent,
And honours shown him wheresoe'er he went.

Yes! there he walks, that lofty man is he,
Who was so rich; but great he could not be.
Now to the paupers who about him stand,
He tells of wonders by his bounty plann'd,
Tells of his traffic, where his vessels sail'd,
And what a trade he drove — before he fail'd;
Then what a failure, not a paltry sum,
Like a mean trader, but for half a plum;
His Lady's wardrobe was apprised so high,
At his own sale, that nobody would buy! —
"But she is gone," he cries, "and never saw
"The spoil and havoc of our cruel law;
"My steeds, our chariot that so roll'd along,
"Admired of all! they sold them for a song.
"You all can witness what my purse could do,
"And now I wear a badge like one of you,
"Who in my service had been proud to live,—
"And this is all a thankless town will give.
"I, who have raised the credit of that town,
"And gave it, thankless as it is, renown—
"Who've done what no man there had done before,
"Now hide my head within an Alms-house door—
"Deprived of all — my wife, my wealth, my vote,
"And in this blue defilement——*Curse the Coat!*"

TALE XII.

THE BROTHER BURGESSES.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XII.

THE BROTHER BURGESSES.

I.

Two busy Brothers in our place reside,
And wealthy each, his party's boast and pride;
Sons of one father, of two mothers born,
They hold each other in true party-scorn.

James is the one who for the people fights,
The sturdy champion of their dubious rights;
Merchant and seaman rough, but not the less
Keen in pursuit of his own happiness;
And what his happiness? — To see his store
Of wealth increase, till Mammon groans, "No more!"

James goes to church — because his father went,
But does not hide his leaning to dissent;
Reasons for this, whoe'er may frown, he'll speak —
Yet the old pew receives him once a week.

Charles is a churchman, and has all the zeal
That a strong member of his church can feel;

A loyal subject is the name he seeks;
He of " his King and Country " proudly speaks:
He says, his brother and a rebel-crew,
Minded like him, the nation would undo,
If they had power, or were esteem'd enough
Of those who had, to bring their plans to proof.

JAMES answers sharply — " I will never place
" My hopes upon a Lordship or a Grace!
" To some great man you bow, to greater he,
" Who to the greatest bends his supple knee,
" That so the manna from the head may drop,
" And at the lowest of the kneelers stop.
" Lords call you loyal, and on them you call
" To spare you something from our plunder'd all:
" If tricks like these to slaves can treasure bring,
" Slaves well may shout them hoarse for ' Church and King! ' "

" Brother!" says Charles, — " yet brother is a name
" I own with pity, and I speak with shame, —
" One of these days you 'll surely lead a mob,
" And then the hangman will conclude the job."

" And would you, Charles, in that unlucky case.
" Beg for his life whose death would bring disgrace
" On you, and all the loyal of our race?
" Your worth would surely from the halter bring
" One neck, and I a patriot then might sing —
" A brother patriot I — God save our noble king."

"James!" said the graver man, in manner grave —
"Your neck I could not, I your soul would save;
"Oh! ere that day, alas, too likely! come,
"I would prepare your mind to meet your doom,
"That then the priest, who prays with that bad race
"Of men, may find you not devoid of grace."

These are the men who, from their seats above,
Hear frequent sermons on fraternal love;
Nay, each approves, and answers — "Very true!
"Brother would heed it, were he not a Jew."

II.

P. — READ I aright? beneath this stately stone
THE BROTHERS rest in peace, their grave is one!
What friend, what fortune interfered, that they
Take their long sleep together, clay with clay?
How came it thus? —

F. — It was their own request,
By both repeated, that they thus might rest.

P. — 'Tis well! Did friends at length the pair unite?
Or was it done because the deed was right?
Did the cool spirit of enfeebling age
Chill the warm blood, and calm the party rage,
And kindly lead them, in their closing day,
To put their animosity away,
Incline their hearts to live in love and peace,
And bid the ferment in each bosom cease?

F.—Rich men have runners, who will to and fro
In search of food for their amusement go;
Who watch their spirits, and with tales of grief
Yield to their melancholy minds relief;
Who of their foes will each mishap relate,
And of their friends the fall or failings state.

One of this breed — the Jackall who supplied
Our Burgess Charles with food for spleen and pride—
Before he utter'd what his memory brought,
On its effect, in doubtful matters, thought,
Lest he, perchance, in his intent might trip,
Or a strange fact might indiscreetly slip; —
But he one morning had a tale to bring,
And felt full sure he need not weigh the thing;
That must be welcome! With a smiling face
He watch'd th' accustom'd nod, and took his place.

"Well! you have news—I see it—Good, my friend,
" No preface, Peter. Speak, man, I attend."

" Then, sir, I 'm told, nay, 't is beyond dispute,
" Our Burgess James is routed horse and foot;
" He 'll not be seen; a clerk for him appears,
" And their precautions testify their fears;
" Before the week be ended you shall see,
" That our famed patriot will a bankrupt be."

" Will he by——! No, I will not be profane,
" But *James* a bankrupt! Boy, my hat and cane.
" No! he 'll refuse my offers — Let me think!
" So would I his: here, give me pen and ink.

" There ! that will do. — What ! let my father's son,
" My brother, want, and I — away ! and run,
" Run as for life, and then return — but stay
" To take his message — now, away, away !"

The pride of James was shaken as he read —
The Brothers met — the angry spirit fled :
Few words were needed — in the look of each
There was a language words can never reach ;
But when they took each other's hand, and press'd,
Subsiding tumult sank to endless rest ;
Nor party wrath with quick affection strove,
Drown'd in the tears of reconciling love.

Affairs confused, and business at a stand,
Were soon set right by Charles's powerful hand ;
The rudest mind in this rude place enjoy'd
The pleasing thought of enmity destroy'd,
And so destroy'd, that neither spite nor spleen,
Nor peevish look from that blest hour were seen ;
Yet each his party and his spirit kept,
Though all the harsh and angry passions slept.

P. — And they too sleep ! and, at their joint request,
Within one tomb, beneath one stone, they rest !

TALE XIII.

THE DEAN'S LADY.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XIII.

THE DEAN'S LADY.

I.

NEXT, to a LADY I must bid adieu—
Whom some in mirth or malice call a "*Blue.*"
There needs no more—when that same word is said,
The men grow shy, respectful, and afraid;
Save the choice friends who in her colour dress,
And all her praise in words like hers express.

Why should proud man in man that knowledge prize,
Which he affects in woman to despise?
Is he not envious when a lady gains,
In hours of leisure, and with little pains,
What he in many a year with painful toil obtains?
For surely knowledge should not odious grow,
Nor ladies be despised for what they know;
Truth to no sex confined, her friends invites,
And woman, long restrain'd, demands her rights.

Nor should a light and odious name be thrown
On the fair dame who makes that knowledge known—
Who bravely dares the world's sarcastic sneer,
And what she is, is willing to appear.

"And what she is not!" peevish man replies,
His envy owning what his pride denies:
But let him, envious as he is, repair
To this sage Dame, and meet conviction there.

MIRANDA sees her morning levee fill'd
With men, in every art and science skill'd —
Men who have gain'd a name, whom she invites,
Because in men of genius she delights.
To these she puts her questions, that produce
Discussion vivid, and discourse abstruse:
She no opinion for its boldness spares,
But loves to show her audience what she dares;
The creeds of all men she takes leave to sift,
And, quite impartial, turns her own adrift.

Her noble mind, with independent force,
Her Rector questions on his late discourse;
Perplex'd and pain'd, he wishes to retire
From one whom critics, nay, whom crowds, admire—
From her whose faith on no man's dictate leans,
Who her large creed from many a teacher gleans;
Who for herself will judge, debate, decide,
And be her own "philosopher and guide."

Why call a lady *Blue?* It is because
She reads, converses, studies for applause;

And therefore all that she desires to know
Is just as much as she can fairly show.
The real knowledge we in secret hide,
It is the counterfeit that makes our pride.
"A little knowledge is a dangerous thing"—
So sings the Poet, and so let him sing:
But if from little learning danger rose,
I know not who in safety could repose.
The evil rises from our own mistake,
When we our ignorance for knowledge take;
Or when the little that we have, through pride,
And vain poor self-love view'd, is magnified.
Nor is your deepest Azure always free
From these same dangerous calls of vanity.

Yet of the sex are those who never show,
By way of exhibition, what they know.
Their books are read and praised, and so are they,
But all without design, without display.
Is there not One who reads the hearts of men,
And paints them strongly with unrivall'd pen?
All their fierce Passions in her scenes appear,
Terror she bids arise, bids fall the tear;
Looks in the close recesses of the mind,
And gives the finish'd portraits to mankind,
By skill conducted, and to Nature true,—
And yet no man on earth would call JOANNA Blue!

Not so MIRANDA! She is ever prest
To give opinions, and she gives her best.
To these with gentle smile her guests incline,
Who come to hear, improve, applaud,—and dine.

Her hungry mind on every subject feeds;
She Adam Smith and Dugald Stewart reads;
Locke entertains her, and she wonders why
His famous Essay is consider'd dry.
For her amusement in her vacant hours
Are earths and rocks, and animals and flowers:
She could the farmer at his work assist,
A systematic agriculturist.
Some men, indeed, would curb the female mind,
Nor let us see that they themselves are blind;
But—thank our stars!—the liberal times allow,
That all may think, and men have rivals now.

Miranda deems all knowledge might be gain'd—
"But she is idle, nor has much attain'd;
"Men are in her deceived: she knows at most
"A few light matters, for she scorns to boast.
"Her mathematic studies she resign'd—
"They did not suit the genius of her mind.
"She thought indeed the higher parts sublime,
"But then they took a monstrous deal of time!"

Frequent and full the letters she delights
To read in part; she names not him who writes—
But here and there a precious sentence shows,
Telling what literary debts she owes.
Works, yet unprinted, for her judgment come,
"Alas!" she cries, "and I must seal their doom.
"Sworn to be just, the judgment gives me pain—
"Ah! why must truth be told, or man be vain?"

Much she has written, and still deigns to write,
But not an effort yet must see the light.
"Cruel!" her friends exclaim; "unkind, unjust!"
But, no! the envious mass she will not trust;
Content to hear that fame is due to her,
Which on her works the world might not confer—
Content with loud applauses while she lives:
Unfelt the pain the cruel critic gives.

II.

P.—Now where the Learned Lady? Doth she live,
Her dinners yet and sentiments to give—
The Dean's wise consort, with the many friends,
From whom she borrows, and to whom she lends
Her precious maxims?

F.—Yes, she lives to shed
Her light around her, but her Dean is dead.
Seen her I have, but seldom could I see:
Borrow she could not, could not lend to me.
Yet, I attended, and beheld the tribe
Attending too, whom I will not describe—
Miranda Thomson! Yes, I sometimes found
A seat among a circle so profound;
When all the science of the age combined
Was in that room, and hers the master-mind.
Well I remember the admiring crowd,
Who spoke their wonder and applause aloud;

They strove who highest should her glory raise,
And cramm'd the hungry mind with honied praise—
While she, with grateful hand, a table spread,
The Dean assenting—but the Dean is dead;
And though her sentiments are still divine,
She asks no more her auditors to dine.

Once from her lips came wisdom; when she spoke,
Her friends in transport or amazement broke.
Now to her dictates there attend but few,
And they expect to meet attention too;
Respect she finds is purchased at some cost,
And deference is withheld, when dinner's lost.

She, once the guide and glory of the place,
Exists between oblivion and disgrace;
Praise once afforded, now,—they say not why,
They dare not say it—fickle men deny;
That buzz of fame a new Minerva cheers,
Which our deserted queen no longer hears.
Old, but not wise, forsaken, not resign'd,
She gives to honours past her feeble mind,
Back to her former state her fancy moves,
And lives on past applause, that still she loves;
Yet holds in scorn the fame no more in view,
And flies the glory that would not pursue
To yon small cot, a poorly jointured *Blue*.

TALE XIV.

THE WIFE AND WIDOW.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XIV.

THE WIFE AND WIDOW.

I.

I LEAVE SOPHIA; it would please me well,
Before we part, on so much worth to dwell:
'T is said of one who lived in times of strife,
There was no boyhood in his busy life;
Born to do all that mortal being can,
The thinking child became at once the man;
So this fair girl in early youth was led,
By reasons strong in early youth, to wed.

In her new state her prudence was her guide,
And of experience well the place supplied;
With life's important business full in view,
She had no time for its amusements too;
She had no practised look man's heart t' allure,
No frown to kill him, and no smile to cure;
No art coquettish, nothing of the prude;
She was with strong yet simple sense endued,

Intent on duties, and resolved to shun
Nothing that ought to be, and could be, done.

A Captain's wife, with him she long sustain'd
The toil of war, and in a camp remain'd;
Her husband wounded, with a child in arms,
She nurst them both, unheeded all alarms:
All useless terror in her soul suppress't —
None could discern in hers a troubled breast.

Her wounded soldier is a prisoner made,
She hears, prepares, and is at once convey'd
Through hostile ranks: — with air sedate she goes,
And makes admiring friends of wondering foes.
Her dying husband to her care confides
Affairs perplex'd; she reasons, she decides;
If intricate her way, her walk discretion guides.

Home to her country she returns alone,
Her health decay'd, her child, her husband, gone;
There she in peace reposes, there resumes
Her female duties, and in rest reblooms;
She is not one at common ills to droop,
Nor to vain murmuring will her spirit stoop.

I leave her thus: her fortieth year is nigh,
She will not for another captain sigh;
Will not a young and gay lieutenant take,
Because 'tis pretty to reform a rake;
Yet she again may plight her widow'd hand,
Should love invite, or charity demand;

And make her days, although for duty's sake,
As sad as folly and mischance can make.

II.

P.—Lives yet the Widow, whose firm spirit bore
Ills unrepining? —

F.—Here she lives no more,
But where—I speak with some good people's leave—
Where all good works their due reward receive;
Though what reward to our best works is due
I leave to them,—and will my tale pursue.

Again she married, to her husband's friend,
Whose wife was hers, whom going to attend,
As on her death-bed she, yet young, was laid,
The anxious parent took her hand and said,
"Prove *now* your love; let these poor infants be
"As thine, and find a mother's love in thee!"

"And must I woo their father?"—"Nay, indeed;
"He no encouragement but hope will need;
"In hope too let me die, and think my wish decreed."

The wife expires; the widow'd pair unite;
Their love was sober, and their prospect bright.
She train'd the children with a studious love,
That knew full well t' encourage and reprove;
Nicely she dealt her praise and her disgrace,
Not harsh and not indulgent out of place,

Not to the forward partial — to the slow
All patient, waiting for the time to sow
The seeds that, suited to the soil, would grow.

Nor watch'd she less the Husband's weaker soul,
But learn'd to lead him who abhorr'd control,
Who thought a nursery, next a kitchen, best
To women suited, and she acquiesced;
She only begg'd to rule in small affairs,
And ease her wedded lord of common cares,
Till he at length thought every care was small,
Beneath his notice, and she had them all.
He on his throne the lawful monarch sate,
And she was by — the minister of state:
He gave assent, and he required no more,
But sign'd the act that she decreed before.

Again, her fates in other work decree
A mind so active should experienced be.

One of the name, who roved the world around,
At length had something of its treasures found,
And childless died, amid his goods and gain,
In far Barbadoes on the western main.
His kinsman heard, and wish'd the wealth to share,
But had no mind to be transported there: —
"His Wife could sail — her courage who could doubt? —
"And she was not tormented with the gout."

She liked it not; but for his children's sake,
And for their father's, would the duty take.

Storms she encounter'd, ere she reach'd the shore,
And other storms when these were heard no more,—
The rage of lawyers forced to drop their prey,—
And once again to England made her way.

She found her Husband with his gout removed,
And a young nurse, most skilful and approved;
Whom—for he yet was weak—he urged to stay,
And nurse him while his consort was away:—
" She was so handy, so discreet, so nice,
" As kind as comfort, though as cold as ice!
" Else," he assured his lady, " in no case,
" So young a creature should have fill'd the place."

It has been held—indeed, the point is clear,
" None are so deaf as those who will not hear:"
And, by the same good logic, we shall find,
" As those who will not see, are none so blind."
The thankful Wife repaid th' attention shown,
But now would make the duty all her own.

Again the gout return'd; but seizing now
A vital part, would no relief allow.

The Husband died, but left a will that proved
He much respected whom he coolly loved.
All power was hers; nor yet was such her age,
But rivals strove her favour to engage:
They talk'd of love with so much warmth and zeal,
That they believed the woman's heart must feel;
Adding such praises of her worth beside,
As vanquish prudence oft by help of pride.

In vain! her heart was by discretion led —
She to the children of her Friend was wed;
These she establish'd in the world, and died,
In ease and hope, serene and satisfied.

And loves not man that woman who can charm
Life's grievous ills, and grief itself disarm? —
Who in his fears and troubles brings him aid,
And seldom is, and never seems, afraid?

No! ask of man the fair one whom he loves,
You 'll find her one of the desponding doves,
Who tender troubles as her portion brings,
And with them fondly to a husband clings —
Who never moves abroad, nor sits at home,
Without distress, past, present, or to come —
Who never walks the unfrequented street,
Without a dread that death and she shall meet:
At land, on water, she must guarded be,
Who sees the danger none besides her see,
And is determined by her cries to call
All men around her: she will have them all.

Man loves to think the tender being lives
But by the power that his protection gives:
He loves the feeble step, the plaintive tone,
And flies to help who cannot stand alone:
He thinks of propping elms, and clasping vines,
And in her weakness thinks her virtue shines;
On him not one of her desires is lost,
And he admires her for this care and cost.

But when afflictions come, when beauty dies,
Or sorrows vex the heart, or danger tries —
When time of trouble brings the daily care,
And gives of pain as much as he can bear —
'T is then he wants, if not the helping hand,
At least a soothing temper, meek and bland —
He wants the heart that shares in his distress,
At least the kindness that would make it less;
And when instead he hears th' eternal grief
For some light want, and not for his relief —
And when he hears the tender trembler sigh,
For some indulgence he can not supply —
When, in the midst of many a care, his "dear,"
Would like a duchess at a ball appear —
And, while he feels a weight that wears him down,
Would see the prettiest sight in all the town, —
Love then departs, and if some Pity lives,
That Pity half despises, half forgives,
'T is join'd with grief, is not from shame exempt,
And has a plenteous mixture of contempt.

TALE XV.

BELINDA WATERS.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XV.

BELINDA WATERS.

I.

Of all the beauties in our favour'd place,
Belinda Waters was the pride and grace.
Say ye who sagely can our fortunes read,
Shall this fair damsel in the world succeed?

A rosy beauty she, and fresh and fair,
Who never felt a caution or a care;
Gentle by nature, ever fond of ease,
And more consenting than inclined to please.
A tame good nature in her spirit lives —
She hates refusal for the pain it gives:
From opposition arguments arise,
And to prevent the trouble, she complies.
She, if in Scotland, would be *fash'd* all day,
If call'd to any work or any play;
She lets no busy, idle wish intrude,
But is by nature negatively good.

In marriage hers will be a dubious fate:
She is not fitted for a high estate; —
There wants the grace, the polish, and the pride;
Less is she fitted for a humble bride:
Whom fair Belinda weds — let chance decide!

She sees her father oft engross'd by cares,
And therefore hates to hear of men's affairs:
An active mother in the household reigns,
And spares Belinda all domestic pains.
Of food she knows but this, that we are fed: —
Though, duly taught, she prays for daily bread,
Yet whence it comes, of hers is no concern —
It comes! and more she never wants to learn.

She on the table sees the common fare,
But how provided is beneath her care.
Lovely and useless, she has no concern
About the things that aunts and mothers learn;
But thinks, when married, — if she thinks at all, —
That what she needs will answer to her call.

To write is business, and, though taught to write,
She keeps the pen and paper out of sight:
What once was painful she cannot allow
To be enjoyment or amusement now.
She wonders why the ladies are so fond
Of such long letters, when they correspond.
Crowded and cross'd by ink of different stain,
She thinks to read them would confuse her brain;
Nor much mistakes; but still has no pretence
To praise for this, her critic's indolence.

Behold her now! she on her sofa looks
O'er half a shelf of circulating books.
This she admired, but she forgets the name,
And reads again another, or the same.
She likes to read of strange and bold escapes,
Of plans and plottings, murders and mishaps,
Love in all hearts, and lovers in all shapes.
She sighs for pity, and her sorrows flow
From the dark eyelash on the page below;
And is so glad when, all the misery past,
The dear adventurous lovers meet at last—
Meet and are happy; and she thinks it hard,
When thus an author might a pair reward —
When they, the troubles all dispersed, might wed —
He makes them part, and die of grief instead!

Yet tales of terror are her dear delight,
All in the wintry storm to read at night;
And to her maid she turns in all her doubt, —
"This shall I like? and what is that about?"

She had "Clarissa" for her heart's dear friend —
Was pleased each well-tried virtue to commend,
And praised the scenes that one might fairly doubt,
If one so young could know so much about:
Pious and pure, th' heroic beauty strove
Against the lover and against the love;
But strange that maid so young should know the strife,
In all its views, was painted to the life!
Belinda knew not — nor a tale would read,
That could so slowly on its way proceed;

And ere Clarissa reach'd the wicked town,
The weary damsel threw the volume down.
" Give me," she said, " for I would laugh or cry,
" ' Scenes from the Life,' and ' Sensibility ;'
" ' Winters at Bath,'—I would that I had one!
" ' The Constant Lover,' the ' Discarded Son,'
" ' The Rose of Raby,' ' Delmore,' or ' The Nun.'
" These promise something, and may please, perhaps,
" Like ' Ethelinda,' and the dear ' Relapse.' "
To these her heart the gentle maid resign'd,
And such the food that fed the gentle mind.

II.

P. — KNEW you the fair BELINDA, once the boast
Of a vain mother, and a favourite toast
Of clerks and young lieutenants, a gay set
Of light admirers? — Is she married yet?

F. — Yes! she is married; though she waited long,
Not from a prudent fear of choosing wrong,
But want of choice. — She took a surgeon's mate,
With his half pay, that was his whole estate.

Fled is the charming bloom that nature spread
Upon her cheek, the pure, the rosy red —
This, and the look serene, the calm, kind look, are fled.
Sorrow and sadness now the place possess,
And the pale cast of anxious fretfulness.

She *wonders* much — as, why they live so ill, —
Why the rude butcher brings his weekly bill, —
She wonders why that baker will not trust, —
And says, most truly says, — " Indeed, he must."
She wonders where her former friends are gone, —
And thus, from day to day, she wonders on.

Howe'er she can — she dresses gaily yet,
And then she wonders how they came in debt.
Her husband loves her, and in accent mild,
Answers, and treats her like a fretted child;
But when he, ruffled, makes severe replies,
And seems unhappy — then she pouts, and cries
" She wonders when she 'll die ! " — She faints, but never dies.

" How well my father lived ! " she says. — " How well,
" My dear, your father's creditors could tell ! "
And then she weeps, till comfort is applied,
That soothes her spleen or gratifies her pride:
Her dress and novels, visits and success
In a chance-game, are soft'ners of distress.

So life goes on ! — But who that loved his life,
Would take a fair Belinda for his wife ?
Who thinks that all are for their stations born,
Some to indulge themselves, and to adorn;
And some, a useful people, to prepare,
Not being rich, good things for those who are,
And who are born, it cannot be denied,
To have their wants and their demands supplied.

She knows that money is a needful thing,
That fathers first, and then that husbands bring;
Or if those persons should the aid deny,
Daughters and wives have but to faint and die,
Till flesh and blood can not endure the pain,
And then the lady lives and laughs again.

To wed an ague, and to feel, for life,
Hot fits and cold succeeding in a wife;
To take the pestilence with poison'd breath,
And wed some potent minister of death,
Is cruel fate—yet death is then relief;
But thus to wed is ever-during grief.

Oft have I heard, how blest the youth who weds
Belinda Waters!—rather he who dreads
That fate—a truth her husband well approves,
Who blames and fondles, humours, chides, and loves.

TALE XVI.

THE DEALER AND CLERK.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XVI.

THE DEALER AND CLERK.

I.

Bad men are seldom cheerful; but we see
That, when successful, they can merry be.
One whom I leave, his darling money lends,
On terms well known, to his unhappy friends;
He farms and trades, and in his method treats
His guests, whom first he comforts, then he cheats.
He knows their private griefs, their inward groans,
And then applies his leeches and his loans,
To failing, falling families—and gets,
I know not how, with large increase, their debts.

He early married, and the woman made
A losing bargain; she with scorn was paid
For no small fortune. On this slave he vents
His peevish slights, his moody discontents.
Her he neglects, indulging in her stead,
One whom he bribed to leave a husband's bed—
A young fair mother too, the pride and joy
Of him whom her desertion will destroy.

The poor man walks by the adulterer's door,
To see the wife, whom he must meet no more:
She will not look upon the face of one
Whom she has blighted, ruined, and undone.
He feels the shame; his heart with grief is rent;
Hers is the guilt, and his the punishment.

The cruel spoiler to his need would lend
Unsought relief — his need will soon have end:
Let a few wint'ry months in sorrow pass,
And on his corse shall grow the vernal grass.
Neighbours, indignant, of his griefs partake,
And hate the villain for the victim's sake;
Wond'ring what bolt within the stores of heaven
Shall on that bold, offending wretch be driven.

Alas! my grieving friends, we cannot know
Why Heaven inflicts, and why suspends, the blow.
Meanwhile the godless man, who thus destroys
Another's peace, in peace his wealth enjoys,
And, every law evaded or defied,
Is with long life and prosperous fortune tried:
"How long?" the Prophet cried, and we, "how long?"
But think how quick that Eye, that Arm how strong,
And bear what seems not right, and trust it is not wrong.

Does Heaven forbear? then sinners mercy find —
Do sinners fall? 't is mercy to mankind.
Adieu! can one so miserable be,
Rich, wretched man! to barter fates with thee?

II.

YET, ere I go, some notice must be paid
To JOHN, his Clerk, a man full sore afraid
Of his own frailty — many a troubled day
Has he walk'd doubtful in some close by-way,
Beseeching Conscience on her watch to keep,
Afraid that she one day should fall asleep.

A quiet man was John: his mind was slow;
Little he knew, and little sought to know.
He gave respect to worth, to riches more,
And had instinctive dread of being poor.
Humble and careful, diligent and neat,
He in the Dealer's office found a seat:
Happy in all things, till a fear began
To break his rest — He served a wicked man;
Who spurn'd the way direct of honest trade,
But praised the laws his cunning could evade.

This crafty Dealer of religion spoke,
As if design'd to be the wise man's cloak,
And the weak man's encumbrance, whom it awes,
And keeps in dread of conscience and the laws;
Yet, for himself, he loved not to appear
In her grave dress; 't was troublesome to wear.

This Dealer played at games of skill, and won
Sums that surprised the simple mind of John:
Nor trusted skill alone; for well he knew,
What a sharp eye and dext'rous hand could do;

When, if suspected, he had always by
The daring oath to back the cunning lie.

John was distress'd, and said, with aching heart,
" I from the vile, usurious man must part;
" For if I go not — yet I mean to go —
" This friend to me will to my soul be foe.
" I serve my master: there is nought to blame;
" But whom he serves, I tremble but to name."

From such reflections sprung the painful fear, —
" The Foe of Souls is too familiar here:
" My master stands between: so far, so good;
" But 't is at best a dangerous neighbourhood."

Then livelier thoughts began this fear to chase, —
" It is a gainful, a convenient place:
" If I should quit — another takes the pen,
" And what a chance for my preferment then?
" Religion nothing by my going gains;
" If I depart, my master still remains.
" True, I record the deeds that I abhor,
" But these that master has to answer for.
" Then say I leave the office! his success,
" And his injustice, will not be the less;
" Nay, would be greater — I am right to stay;
" It checks him, doubtless, in his fearful way.
" Fain would I stay, and yet be not beguiled;
" But pitch is near, and man is soon defiled."

III.

P.—Such were the Man and Master,—and I
Would know if they together live, and how. [now

To such enquiries, thus my Friend replied:—
F.—The Wife was slain—or, say at least, she
died.
But there are murders, that the human eye
Cannot detect,—which human laws defy:
There are the wrongs insulted fondness feels,
In many a secret wound that never heals;
The Savage murders with a single blow;
Murders like this are secret and are slow.

Yet, when his victim lay upon her bier,
There were who witness'd that he dropt a tear;
Nay, more, he praised the woman he had lost,
And undisputed paid the funeral cost.

The Favourite now, her lord and master freed,
Prepared to wed, and be a wife indeed.
The day, 't was said, was fix'd, the robes were
bought,
A feast was order'd; but a cold was caught,
And pain ensued, with fever—grievous pain,
With the mind's anguish that disturb'd the brain,—
Till nature ceased to struggle, and the mind
Saw clearly death before, and sin behind.
Priests and physicians gave what they could give;
She turn'd away, and, shuddering, ceased to live.

The Dealer now appeared awhile as one
Lost; with but little of his race to run,
And that in sorrow: men with one consent,
And one kind hope, said, "Bonner will repent."
Alas! we saw not what his fate would be,
But this we fear'd,—no penitence had he;
Nor time for penitence, nor any time,
So quick the summons, to look back on crime.

When he the partner of his sin entomb'd,
He paused awhile, and then the way resumed,
Ev'n as before: yet was he not the same;
The tempter once, he now the dupe became.
John long had left him, nor did one remain
Who would his harlot in her course refrain;
Obsequious, humble, studious of his ease,
The present Phœbe only sought to please.
"With one so artless, what," said he, "to fear,
"Or what to doubt, in one who holds me dear?
"Friends she may have, but me she will not wrong;
"If weak her judgment, yet her love is strong;
"And I am lucky now in age to find
"A friend so trusty, and a nurse so kind."

Yet neither party was in peace: the man
Had restless nights, and in the morn began
To cough and tremble; he was hot and cold—
He had a nervous fever, he was told.
His dreams—'t was strange, for none reflected less
On his past life—were frightful to excess;
His favourite dinners were no more enjoy'd,
And, in a word, his spirits were destroy'd.

And what of Phœbe? She her measures plann'd;
All but his money was at her command:
All would be hers when Heav'n her Friend should call;
But Heav'n was slow, and much she long'd for all:—
"Mine when he dies, mean wretch! and why not mine,
"When it would prove him generous to resign
"What he enjoys not?"—Phœbe at command
Gave him his brandy with a liberal hand.
A way more quick and safe she did not know,
And brandy, though it might be sure, was slow.
But more she dared not; for she felt a dread
Of being tried, and only wish'd him dead.
Such was her restless strife of hope and fear—
He might cough on for many a weary year;
Nay, his poor mind was changing, and when ill,
Some foe to her may wicked thoughts instil!
Oh! 't is a trial sore to watch a Miser's will.
Thus, though the pair appear'd in peace to live,
They felt that vice has not that peace to give.

There watch'd a cur before the Miser's gate,
A very cur, whom all men seem'd to hate;
Gaunt, savage, shaggy, with an eye that shone
Like a live coal, and he possess'd but one;
His bark was wild and eager, and became
That meagre body and that eye of flame;
His master prized him much, and *Fang* his name.
His master fed him largely; but not that,
Nor aught of kindness, made the snarler fat.

Flesh he devour'd, but not a bit would stay;
He bark'd, and snarl'd, and growl'd it all away.
His ribs were seen extended like a rack,
And coarse red hair hung roughly o'er his back.
Lamed in one leg, and bruised in wars of yore,
Now his sore body made his temper sore.
Such was the friend of him, who could not find,
Nor make him one, 'mong creatures of his kind.
Brave deeds of Fang his master often told,
The son of Fury, famed in days of old,
From Snatch and Rabid sprung; and noted they
In earlier times—each dog will have his day.

The notes of Fang were to his master known,
And dear—they bore some likeness to his own;
For both convey'd to the experienced ear,
"I snarl and bite, because I hate and fear."
None pass'd ungreeted by the master's door,
Fang rail'd at all, but chiefly at the poor;
And when the nights were stormy, cold, and dark,
The act of Fang was a perpetual bark;
But though the master loved the growl of Fang,
There were who vow'd the ugly cur to hang;
Whose angry master, watchful for his friend,
As strongly vow'd his servant to defend.

In one dark night, and such as Fang before
Was ever known its tempests to outroar,
To his protector's wonder now express'd
No angry notes—his anger was at rest.
The wond'ring master sought the silent yard,
Left Phœbe sleeping, and his door unbarr'd;

Nor more returned to that forsaken bed —
But lo! the morning came, and he was dead.
Fang and his master side by side were laid
In grim repose — their debt of nature paid!
The master's hand upon the cur's cold chest
Was now reclined, and had before been press'd,
As if he search'd how deep and wide the wound
That laid such spirit in a sleep so sound;
And when he found it was the sleep of death,
A sympathising sorrow stopp'd his breath.
Close to his trusty servant he was found,
As cold his body, and his sleep as sound.

We know no more; but who on horrors dwell
Of that same night have dreadful things to tell:
Of outward force, they say, was not a sign —
The hand that struck him was the Hand Divine;
And then the Fiend, in that same stormy night,
Was heard — as many thought — to claim his right;
While grinning imps the body danced about,
And then they vanish'd with triumphant shout.

So think the crowd, and well it seems in them,
That ev'n their dreams and fancies vice condemn;
That not alone for virtue Reason pleads,
But Nature shudders at unholy deeds;
While our strong fancy lists in her defence,
And takes the side of Truth and Innocence.

IV.

P.—But, what the fortune of the Man, whose fear
Inform'd his Conscience that the foe was near;
But yet whose interest to his desk confined
That sober Clerk of indecisive mind?

F.—John served his master, with himself at strife,
For he with Conscience lived like man and wife;
Now jarring, now at peace,—the life they led
Was all contention, both at board and bed:
His meals were troubled by his scruples all,
And in his dreams he was about to fall
Into some strong temptation—for it seems
He never could resist it in his dreams.

At length his Master, dealer, smuggler, cheat,
As John would call him in his temper's heat,
Proposed a something—what, is dubious still—
That John resisted with a stout good-will.
Scruples like his were treated with disdain,
Whose waking conscience spurn'd the offer'd gain.
"Quit then my office, scoundrel! and be gone."
"I dare not do it," said the affrighten'd John.
"What fear'st thou, driveller! can thy fancy tell?"
"I doubt," said John—"I'm sure there is a hell."
"No question, wretch! thy foot is on the door;
"To be in hell, thou fool! is to be poor: [sigh,
"Wilt thou consent?"—But John, with many a
Refused, then sank beneath his stronger eye,

Who with a curse dismiss'd the fool that dared
Not join a venture which he might have shared.

The worthy Clerk then served a man in trade,
And was his friend and his companion made—
A sickly man, who sundry wares retail'd,
Till, while his trade increased, his spirit fail'd.
John was to him a treasure, whom he proved,
And, finding faithful, as a brother loved.
To John his views and business he consign'd,
And forward look'd with a contented mind:
As sickness bore him onward to the grave,
A charge of all things to his friend he gave.

But neighbours talk'd — 'twas idle — of the day
When Richard Shale should walk the dark highway—
And whisper'd — tatlers! — that the wife received
Such hints with anger, but she nothing grieved.

These whispers reach'd the man, who weak, and ill
In mind and body, had to make his will;
And though he died in peace, and all resign'd,
'T was plain he harbour'd fancies in his mind.
With jealous foresight, all that he had gain'd
His widow's was, while widow she remain'd;
But if another should the dame persuade
To wed again, farewell the gains of trade:
For if the widow'd dove could not refrain,
She must return to poverty again.

The man was buried, and the will was read,
And censure spared them not, alive or dead!

At first the Widow and the Clerk, her friend,
Spent their free days as prudence bade them spend.
At the same table they would dine, 't is true,
And they would worship in the self-same pew:
Each had the common interest so at heart,
It would have grieved them terribly to part;
And as they both were serious and sedate,
'T was long before the world began to prate:
But when it prated, —though without a cause, —
It put the pair in mind of breaking laws,
Led them to reason what it was that gave
A husband power, when quiet in his grave.
The marriage contract they had now by heart —
"Till death!" — you see, no longer — "do us part."
"Well! death has loosed us from the tie, but still
"The loosen'd husband makes a binding will:
"Unjust and cruel are the acts of men."
Thus they — and then they sigh'd — and then — and then,
"'T was snaring souls," they said; and how he dared
They did not know — they wonder'd — and were snared.

"It is a marriage, surely! Conscience might
"Allow an act so very nearly right:
"Was it not witness to our solemn vow,
"As man and wife? it must the act allow."
But Conscience, stubborn to the last, replied,
"It cannot be! I am not satisfied;
"'T is not a marriage: either dare be poor,
"Or dare be virtuous — part, and sin no more."

Alas! they many a fond evasion made;
They could relinquish neither love nor trade.
They went to church, but thinking, fail'd to pray;
They felt not ease or comfort at a play:
If times were good, — "We merit not such times,"
If ill, — "Is this the produce of our crimes?"
When sick — "'Tis thus forbidden pleasures cease."
When well — they both demand, "Had Zimri peace?
"For though our worthy master was not slain,
"His injured ghost has reason to complain."

Ah, John! bethink thee of thy generous joy,
When Conscience drove thee from thy late employ;
When thou wert poor, and knew not where to run,
But then could say "The will of God be done!"
When thou that will, and not thine own obey'd, —
Of Him alone, and not of man afraid:
Thou then hadst pity on that wretch, and, free
Thyself, couldst pray for him who injured thee.
Then how alert thy step, thyself how light
All the day long! thy sleep how sound at night!

But now, though plenty on thy board be found,
And thou hast credit with thy neighbours round,
Yet there is something in thy looks that tells,
An odious secret in thy bosom dwells:
Thy form is not erect, thy neighbours trace
A coward spirit in thy shifting pace.
Thou goest to meeting, not from any call,
But just to hear, that we are sinners all,
And equal sinners, or the difference made
'Twixt man and man has but the slightest shade;

That reformation asks a world of pains,
And, after all, must leave a thousand stains;
And, worst of all, we must the work begin
By first attacking the prevailing sin! —

These thoughts the feeble mind of John assail,
And o'er his reason and his fears prevail:
They fill his mind with hopes of gifts and grace,
Faith, feelings! — something that supplies the place
Of true conversion — this will he embrace;
For John perceives that he was scarcely tried
By the first conquest, that increased his pride,
When he refused his master's crime to aid,
And by his self-applause was amply paid;
But now he feels the difference — feels it hard
Against his will and favourite wish to guard:
He mourns his weakness, hopes he shall prevail
Against his frailty, and yet still is frail.

Such is his life! and such the life must be
Of all who will be bound, yet would be free;
Who would unite what God to part decrees —
The offended conscience, and the mind at ease;
Who think, but vainly think, to sin and pray,
And God and Mammon in their turn obey.
Such is his life! — and so I would not live
For all that wealthy widows have to give.

TALE XVII.

DANVERS AND RAYNER.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XVII.

DANVERS AND RAYNER.

I.

The purest Friendship, like the finest ware,
Deserves our praises, but demands our care.
For admiration we the things produce,
But they are not design'd for common use;
Flaws the most trifling from their virtue take,
And lamentation for their loss we make:
While common Friendships, like the wares of clay,
Are a cheap kind, but useful every day:
Though crack'd and damaged, still we make them do,
And when they 're broken, they 're forgotten too.

There is within the world in which we dwell
A Friendship, answering to that world full well;
An interchange of looks and actions kind,
And, in some sense, an intercourse of mind;
A useful commerce, a convenient trade,
By which both parties are the happier made;
And, when the thing is rightly understood,
And justly valued, it is wise and good.

I speak not here of Friendships that excite
In boys at school such wonder and delight,—
Of high heroic Friends, in serious strife,
Contending which should yield a forfeit life —
Such wondrous love, in their maturer days,
Men, if they credit, are content to praise.

I speak not here of Friendships true and just,
When friend can friend with life and honour trust;
Where mind to mind has long familiar grown,
And every failing, every virtue known:
Of these I speak not: things so rich and rare,
That we degrade with jewels to compare,
Or bullion pure and massy.—I intend
To treat of one whose Neighbour called him Friend,
Or called him Neighbour; and with reason good —
The friendship rising from the neighbourhood:
A sober kind, in common service known;
Not such as is in death and peril shown:
Such as will give or ask a helping hand,
But no important sacrifice demand;
In fact, a friendship that will long abide,
If seldom rashly, never strongly, tried.
Yes! these are sober friendships, made for use,
And much convenience they in life produce:
Like a good coat, that keeps us from the cold,
The cloth of frieze is not a cloth of gold;
But neither is it pyebald, pieced, and poor;
'Tis a good useful coat, and nothing more.

Such is the Friendship of the world approved,
And here the Friends so loving and so loved:—

DANVERS and RAYNER, equals, who had made
Each decent fortune, both were yet in trade;
While sons and daughters, with a youthful zeal,
Seem'd the hereditary love to feel:
And ev'n their wives, though either might pretend
To claim some notice, call'd each other friend.

While yet their offspring boys and girls appear'd,
The fathers ask'd, "What evil could be fear'd?"
Nor is it easy to assign the year,
When cautious parents should begin to fear.
The boys must leave their schools, and, by and by,
The girls are sure to grow reserved and shy;
And then, suppose a real love should rise,
It but unites the equal families.

Love does not always from such freedom spring;
Distrust, perhaps, would sooner cause the thing.
"We will not check it, neither will we force"—
Thus said the fathers—"Let it take its course."

It took its course:—young Richard Danvers' mind
In Phœbe Rayner found what lovers find—
Sense, beauty, sweetness; all that mortal eyes
Can see, or heart conceive, or thought devise.
And Phœbe's eye, and thought, and heart could trace
In Richard Danvers every manly grace—
All that e'er maiden wish'd, or matron prized—
So well these good young people sympathised.

All their relations, neighbours, and allies,
All their dependants, visitors, and spies,

Such as a wealthy family caress,
Said here was love, and drank to love's success.

'T is thus I leave the parties, young and old,
Lovers and Friends. Will Love and Friendship hold?
Will Prudence with the children's wish comply,
And Friendship strengthen with that new ally?

II.

P.— I SEE no more within our borough's bound
The name of DANVERS! Is it to be found?
Were the young pair in Hymen's fetters tied,
Or did succeeding years the Friends divide?

F.— Nay! take the story, as by time brought forth,
And of such Love and Friendship judge the worth.
While the lad's love—his parents call'd it so—
Was going on, as well as love could go,
A wealthy Danvers, in a distant place,
Left a large fortune to this favour'd race.
To that same place the father quickly went,
And Richard only murmur'd weak dissent.

Of Richard's heart the parent truly guess'd: —
" Well, my good lad! then do what suits thee best;
" No doubt thy brothers will do all they can
" T' obey the orders of the good old man:
" Well, I would not thy free-born spirit bind;
" Take, Dick, the way to which thou 'rt most inclined."

No answer gave the youth; nor did he swear
The old man's riches were beneath his care;
Nor that he would with his dear Phœbe stay,
And let his heartless father move away.
No! kind and constant, tender, faithful, fond, —
Thus far he'd go — but not one step beyond!
Not disobedient to a parent's will —
A lover constant — but dependent still.

Letters, at first, between the constant swain
And the kind damsel banish'd all their pain:
Both full and quick they were; for lovers write
With vast despatch, and read with vast delight —
So quick they were, — for Love is never slow, —
So full, they ever seem'd to overflow.
Their hearts are ever fill'd with grief or joy,
And these to paint is every hour's employ:
Joy they would not retain; and for their grief,
To read such letters is a sure relief.

But, in due time, both joy and grief suppress,
They found their comfort in a little rest.
Mails went and came without the accustom'd freight,
For Love grew patient, and content to wait —
Yet was not dead, nor yet afraid to die;
For though he wrote not, Richard wonder'd why.
He could not justly tell how letters pass'd,
But, as to him appear'd, he wrote the last:
In this he meant not to accuse the maid —
Love, in some cases, ceases to upbraid.

Yet not indifferent was our Lover grown,
Although the ardour of the flame was flown;
He still of Phœbe thought, her lip, her smile —
But grew contented with his fate the while.
Thus, not inconstant were the youthful pair —
The Lad remembered still the Lass was fair;
And Phœbe still, with half-affected sigh,
Thought it a pity that such love should die;
And had they then, with this persuasion, met,
Love had rekindled, and been glowing yet.

But times were changed: no mention now was
By the old Squire, or by the young, of trade. [made
The worthy Lady, and her children all,
Had due respect — The People at the Hall.
His Worship now read Burn, and talk'd with skill
About the poor-house, and the turnpike-bill;
Lord of a manor, he had serious claims,
And knew the poaching rascals by their names:
And if the father thus improved his mind,
Be sure the children were not far behind:
To rank and riches what respect was due,
To them and theirs what deference, well they knew;
And, from the greatest to the least, could show
What to the favouring few the favour'd many owe.

The mind of man must have whereon to work,
Or it will rust — we see it in the Turk;
And Justice Danvers, though he read the news,
And all of law that magistrates peruse, —
Bills about roads and charities, — yet still
Wanted employ his vacant mind to fill;

These were not like the shipping, once his pride,
Now, with his blue surtout, laid all aside.

No doubt, his spirits in their ebb to raise,
He found some help in men's respect and praise —
Praise of his house, his land, his lawn, his trees —
He cared not what — to praise him was to please:
Yet though his rural neighbours called to dine,
And some might kindly praise his food and wine,
This was not certain, and another day,
He must the visit and the praise repay.

By better motives urged — we will suppose —
He thus began his purpose to disclose
To his good lady: — "We have lived a year,
"And never ask'd our friends the Rayners here:
"Do let us ask them — as for Richard's flame,
"It went, we see, as idly as it came —
"Invite them kindly — here's a power of room,
"And the poor people will be glad to come.
"Outside and in, the coach will hold them all,
"And set them down beside the garden wall."

The Lady wrote, for that was all he meant,
Kind soul! by asking for his wife's assent:
And every Rayner was besought to come
To dine in Hulver Hall's grand dining-room.

About this time old Rayner, who had lost
His Friend's advice, was by misfortune cross'd:

Some debtors fail'd, when large amounts were due,
So large, that he was nearly failing too;
But he, grown wary, that he might not fail,
Brought to in adverse gales, and shorten'd sail:
This done, he rested, and could now attend
The invitation of his distant Friend.

"Well! he would go; but not, indeed, t' admire
"The state and grandeur of the new-made Squire;
"Danvers, belike, now wealthy, might impart
"Some of his gold; for Danvers had a heart,
"And may have heard, though guarded so around,
"That I have lost the fortune he has found:
"Yes! Dick is kind, or he and his fine seat
"Might go to —— where we never more should meet."

Now, lo! the Rayners all at Hulver Place,—
Or Hulver Hall—'tis not a certain case;
'Tis only known that Ladies' notes were sent
Directed both ways, and they always went.

We pass the greetings, and the dinner pass,
All the male gossip o'er the sparkling glass,
And female when retired:—The Squire invites
His Friend, by sleep refresh'd, to see his sights—
His land and lions, granary, barns, and crops,
His dairy, piggery, pinery, apples, hops;—
But here a hill appears, and Peter Rayner stops.

"Ah! my old Friend, I give you joy," he cries:
"But some are born to fall, and some to rise;

" You 're better many a thousand, I the worse—
" Dick, there 's no dealing with a failing purse;
" Nor does it shame me (mine is all mischance)
" To wish some friendly neighbour would advance"—
—— But here the guest on such a theme was low.
His host, meantime, intent upon the show,
In hearing heard not—they came out to see,—
And pushing forward—"There's a view," quoth he;
" Observe that ruin, built, you see, tó catch
" The gazer's eye; that cottage with the thatch—
" It cost me—guess you what?"—that sound of *cost*
Was accidental, but it was not lost.

" Ah! my good Friend, be sure such things as these
" Suit well enough a man who lives at ease:
" Think what 'The Betsy' *cost*, and think the shock
" Of losing her upon the Dodder-Rock:
" The tidings reach'd me on the very day
" That villain robb'd us, and then ran away.
" Loss upon loss! now if——"

"Do stay a bit;"
Exclaim'd the Squire, " these matters hardly fit
" A morning ramble—let me show you now
" My team of oxen, and my patent plough.
" Talk of your horses! I the plan condemn—
" They eat us up—but oxen! we eat them;
" For first they plough and bring us bread to eat,
" And then we fat and kill them—there's the meat.

"What's your opinion?"—
—"I am poorly fed,
"And much afraid to want both meat and bread,"
Said Rayner, half indignant; and the Squire
Sigh'd, as he felt he must no more require
A man, whose prospects fail'd, his prospects to admire.

Homeward they moved, and met a gentle pair,
The poor man's daughter, and the rich man's heir:
This caused some thought; but on the couple went,
And a soft hour in tender converse spent.
This pair, in fact, their passion roused anew,
Alone much comfort from the visit drew.

At home the Ladies were engaged, and all
Show'd or were shown the wonders of the Hall;
From room to room the weary guests went on,
Till every Rayner wish'd the show was done.

Home they return'd: the Father deeply sigh'd
To find he vainly had for aid applied:
It hurt him much to ask — and more to be denied.

The younger Richard, who alone sustain'd
The dying Friendship, true to Love remain'd:
His Phœbe's smiles, although he did not yet
Fly to behold, he could not long forget;
Nor durst he visit, nor was love so strong,
That he could more than think his Father wrong;
For, wrong or right, that father still profess'd
The most obedient son should fare the best.

So time pass'd on; the second spring appear'd,
Ere Richard ventured on the deed he fear'd:—
He dared at length; and not so much for love,
I grieve to add, but that he meant to prove
He had a will:— His father, in reply,
This known, had answer'd, "So, my son, have I."
But Richard's courage was by prudence taught,
And he his nymph in secret service sought.
Some days of absence — not with full consent,
But with slow leave — were to entreaty lent;
And forth the Lover rode, uncertain what he meant.

He reached the dwelling he had known so long,
When a pert damsel told him, "he was wrong;
"Their house she did not just precisely know,
"But he would find it somewhere in *the Row*;
"The Rayners now were come a little down,
"Nor more the topmost people in the town;"
She might have added, they their life enjoy'd,
Although on things less hazardous employ'd.

This was not much; but yet the damsel's sneer,
And the Row-dwelling of a lass so dear,
Were somewhat startling. He had heard, indeed,
That Rayner's business did not well succeed:
"But what of that? They lived in decent style,
"No doubt, and Phœbe still retain'd her smile;
"And why," he asked, "should all men choose to dwell
"In broad cold streets? — the Row does just as well,
"Quiet and snug;" and then the favourite maid
Rose in his fancy, tastefully array'd,

Looking with grateful joy upon the swain,
Who could his love in trying times retain.

Soothed by such thoughts, to the new house he came,
Surveyed its aspect, sigh'd, and gave his name.
But ere they opened, he had waited long,
And heard a movement — Was there somewhat wrong?
Nay, but a friendly party, he was told;
And look'd around, as wishing to behold
Some friends — but these were not the friends of old.

Old Peter Rayner, in his own old mode,
Bade the Squire welcome to his new abode,
For Richard had been kind, and doubtless meant
To make proposals now, and ask consent.
Mamma and misses, too, were civil all;
But what their awkward courtesy to call,
He knew not; neither could he well express
His sad sensations at their strange address.
And then their laughter loud, their story-telling,
All seem'd befitting to that Row and dwelling;
The hearty welcome to the various treat
Was lost on him — he could nor laugh nor eat.

But one thing pleased him, when he look'd around,
His dearest Phœbe could not there be found:
" Wise and discreet," he says, " she shuns the crew
" Of vulgar neighbours, some kind act to do;
" In some fair house, some female friend to meet,
" Or take at evening prayer in church her seat."

Meantime there rose, amid the ceaseless din,
A mingled scent, that crowded room within,
Rum and red-herring, Cheshire cheese and gin;
Pipes, too, and punch, and sausages, with tea,
Were things that Richard was disturb'd to see.
Impatient now, he left them in disdain,
To call on Phœbe, when he call'd again;
To walk with her, the morning fair and bright,
And lose the painful feelings of the night.

All in the Row, and tripping at the side
Of a young Sailor, he the nymph espied,
As homeward hastening with her happy boy,
She went to join the party, and enjoy.
"Fie!" Phœbe cried, as her companion spoke,
Yet laugh'd to hear the fie-compelling joke;—
Just then her chance to meet, her shame to know,
Her tender Richard, moving sad and slow,
Musing on things full strange, the manners of the Row.

At first amazed, and then alarm'd, the fair
Late-laughing maid now stood in dumb despair:
As when a debtor meets in human shape
The foe of debtors, and cannot escape,
He stands in terror, nor can longer aim
To keep his credit, or preserve his name,
Stood Phœbe fix'd! "Unlucky time and place!
"An earlier hour had kept me from disgrace!"
She thought — but now the sailor, undismay'd,
Said, "My dear Phœbe, why are you afraid?

" The man seems civil, or he soon should prove
" That I can well defend the girl I love.
" Are you not mine?" She utter'd no reply: —
" Thine I must be," she thought; " more foolish I!"
While Richard at the scene stood mute and wondering by.

His spirits hurried, but his bosom light,
He left his Phœbe with a calm " good night."
So Love like Friendship fell! The youth awhile
Dreamt, sorely moved, of Phœbe's witching smile—
But learned in daylight visions to forego
The Sailor's laughing Lass, the Phœbe of the Row.

Home turn'd young Richard, in due time to turn,
With all old Richard's zeal, the leaves of Burn;
And home turned Phœbe — in due time to grace
A tottering cabin with a tattered race.

TALE XVIII.

THE BOAT RACE.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XVIII.

THE BOAT RACE.

I.

The man who dwells where party-spirit reigns,
May feel its triumphs, but must wear its chains;
He must the friends and foes of party take
For his, and suffer for his honour's sake;
When once enlisted upon either side,
He must the rude septennial storm abide—
A storm that when its utmost rage is gone,
In cold and angry mutterings murmurs on:
A slow unbending scorn, a cold disdain,
Till years bring the full tempest back again.

Within our Borough two stiff sailors dwelt,
Who both this party storm and triumph felt;
Men who had talents, and were both design'd
For better things, but anger made them blind.

In the same year they married, and their wives
Had pass'd in friendship their yet peaceful lives,

And, as they married in a time of peace,
Had no suspicion that their love must cease.
In fact it did not; but they met by stealth,
And that perhaps might keep their love in health;
Like children watch'd, desirous yet afraid,
Their visits all were with discretion paid.

One Captain, so by courtesy we call
Our hoy's commanders—they are captains all—
Had sons and daughters many; while but one
The rival Captain bless'd—a darling son.
Each was a burgess to his party tied,
And each was fix'd, but on a different side;
And he who sought his son's pure mind to fill
With wholesome food, would evil too instil.
The last in part succeeded—but in part—
For Charles had sense, had virtue, had a heart;
And he had soon the cause of Nature tried
With the stern father, but this father died;
Who on his death-bed thus his son address'd:—
"Swear to me, Charles, and let my spirit rest—
"Swear to our party to be ever true,
"And let me die in peace—I pray thee, do."

With some reluctance, but obedience more,
The weeping youth reflected, sigh'd, and swore;
Trembling, he swore for ever to be true,
And wear no colour but the untainted Blue:
This done, the Captain died in so much joy,
As if he'd wrought salvation for his boy.

The female friends their wishes yet retain'd,
But seldom met, by female fears restrain'd;

Yet in such town, where girls and boys must meet,
And every house is known in every street,
Charles had before, nay since his father's death,
Met, say by chance, the young Elizabeth;
Who was both good and graceful, and in truth
Was but too pleasing to th' observing youth;
And why I know not, but the youth to her
Seem'd just that being that she could prefer.
Both were disposed to think that party-strife
Destroy'd the happiest intercourse of life;
Charles, too, his growing passion could defend —
His father's foe he call'd his mother's friend.
Mothers, indeed, he knew were ever kind;
But in the Captain should he favour find?
He doubted this — yet could he that command
Which fathers love, and few its power withstand.

The mothers both agreed their joint request
Should to the Captain jointly be address'd;
And first the lover should his heart assail,
And then the ladies, and if all should fail, [prevail.
They'd singly watch the hour, and jointly might

The Captain's heart, although unused to melt,
A strong impression from persuasion felt;
His pride was soften'd by the prayers he heard,
And then advantage in the match appear'd.

At length he answer'd, — "Let the lad enlist
"In our good cause, and I no more resist;
"For I have sworn, and to my oath am true,
"To hate that colour, that rebellious Blue.

" His father once, ere master of the brig,
" For that advantage turn'd a rascal Whig:
" Now let the son — a wife's a better thing —
" A Tory turn, and say, God save the King!
" For I am pledged to serve that sacred cause,
" And love my country, while I keep her laws."

The women trembled; for they knew full well
The fact they dare not to the Captain tell;
And the poor youth declared, with tears and sighs,
" My oath was pass'd: I dare not compromise."

But Charles to reason made his strong appeal,
And to the heart—he bade him think and feel:
The Captain answering, with reply as strong, —
" If you be right, then how can I be wrong?
" You to your father swore to take his part;
" I to oppose it ever, head and heart;
" You to a parent made your oath, and I
" To God! and can I to my Maker lie?
" Much, my dear lad, I for your sake would do,
" But I have sworn, and to my oath am true."

Thus stood the parties when my fortunes bore
Me far away from this my native shore:
And who prevail'd, I know not — Young or Old;
But, I beseech you, let the tale be told.

II.

P.—How fared these lovers? Many a time I thought
How with their ill-starr'd passion Time had wrought.
Did either party from his oath recede,
Or were they never from the bondage freed?

F.—Alas! replied my Friend—the tale I tell
With some reluctance, nor can do it well.
There are three females in the place, and they,
Like skilful painters, could the facts portray,
In their strong colours—all that I can do
Is to present a weak imperfect view;
The colours I must leave—the outlines shall be true.

Soon did each party see the other's mind,
What bound them both, and what was like to bind;
Oaths deeply taken in such time and place,
To break them now was dreadful—was disgrace!

"That oath a dying father bade me take,
"Can I—yourself a father—can I break?"

"That oath which I a living sinner took,
"Shall I make void, and yet for mercy look?"

The women wept; the men, themselves distress'd,
The cruel rage of party zeal confess'd:
But solemn oaths, though sprung from party zeal,
Feel them we must, as Christians ought to feel.

Yet shall a youth so good, a girl so fair,
From their obedience only draw despair?
Must they be parted? Is there not a way
For them both love and duty to obey?
Strongly they hoped; and by their friends around
A way, at least a lover's way, was found.

"Give up your vote; you 'll then no longer be
"Free in one sense, but in the better free."
Such was of reasoning friends the kind advice,
And how could lovers in such case be nice?
A man may swear to walk directly on
While sight remains; but how if sight be gone?
"Oaths are not binding when the party's dead;
"Or when the power to keep the oath is fled:
"If I 've no vote, I 've neither friend nor foe,
"Nor can be said on either side to go."
They were no casuists: — "Well!" the Captain cried,
"Give up your vote, man, and behold your bride!"

Thus was it fix'd, and fix'd the day for both
To take the vow, and set aside the oath.
It gave some pain, but all agreed to say,
"You 're now absolved, and have no other way:
"'T is not expected you should love resign
"For man's commands, for love's are all divine."

When all is quiet and the mind at rest,
All in the calm of innocence are blest;
But when some scruple mixes with our joy,
We love to give the anxious mind employ.

In autumn late, when evening suns were bright,
The day was fix'd the lovers to unite;
But one before the eager Captain chose
To break, with jocund act, his girl's repose,
And, sailor-like, said, " Hear how I intend
" One day, before the day of days, to spend!
" All round the quay, and by the river's side,
" Shall be a scene of glory for the bride.
" We'll have a RACE, and colours will devise
" For every boat, for every man a prize:
" But that which first returns shall bear away
" The proudest pendant—Let us name the day."

They named the day, and never morn more bright
Rose on the river, nor so proud a sight:
Or if too calm appear'd the cloudless skies,
Experienced seamen said the wind would rise.
To that full quay from this then vacant place
Thronged a vast crowd to see the promised Race.
Mid boats new painted, all with streamers fair,
That flagg'd or flutter'd in that quiet air—
The Captain's boat that was so gay and trim,
That made his pride, and seem'd as proud of him—
Her, in her beauty, we might all discern,
Her rigging new, and painted on the stern,
As one who could not in the contest fail,
" Learn of *the little Nautilus* to sail."

So forth they started at the signal gun,
And down the river had three leagues to run;
This sail'd, they then their watery way retrace,
And the first landed conquers in the race.

The crowd await till they no more discern,
Then parting say, " At evening we return."

I could proceed, but you will guess the fate,
And but too well my tale anticipate.

P.—True! yet proceed—
F.—The lovers had some grief
In this day's parting, but the time was brief;
And the poor girl, between his smiles and sighs,
Ask'd, " Do you wish to gain so poor a prize?"

" But that your father wishes," he replied,
" I would the honour had been still denied:
" It makes me gloomy, though I would be gay,
" And oh! it seems an everlasting day."
So thought the lass, and as she said, farewell!
Soft sighs arose, and tears unbidden fell.

The morn was calm, and ev'n till noon the strong
Unruffled flood moved quietly along;
In the dead calm the billows softly fell,
And mock'd the whistling sea-boy's favourite spell:
So rests at noon the reaper, but to rise
With mightier force and twofold energies.
The deep, broad stream moved softly, all was hush'd,
When o'er the flood the breeze awakening brush'd;
A sullen sound was heard along the deep,
The stormy spirit rousing from his sleep;
The porpoise rolling on the troubled wave,
Unwieldy tokens of his pleasure gave;

Dark, chilling clouds the troubled deep deform,
And led by terror downward rush'd the storm.

As evening came, along the river's side,
Or on the quay, impatient crowds divide,
And then collect; some whispering, as afraid
Of what they saw, and more of what they said,
And yet must speak: how sudden and how great
The danger seem'd, and what might be the fate
Of men so toss'd about in craft so small,
Lost in the dark, and subject to the squall.
Then sounds are so appalling in the night,
And, could we see, how terrible the sight;
None knew the evils that they all suspect,
And Hope at once they covet and reject.

But where the wife, her friend, her daughter, where?
Alas! in grief, in terror, in despair —
At home, abroad, upon the quay. No rest
In any place, but where they are not, best.
Fearful they ask, but dread the sad reply,
And many a sailor tells the friendly lie —
"There is no danger — that is, we believe,
"And think — and hope" — but this does not deceive,
Although it soothes them; while they look around,
Trembling at every sight and every sound.

Let me not dwell on terrors —— It is dark,
And lights are carried to and fro, and hark!

There is a cry—"a boat, a boat at hand!"
What a still terror is there now on land!
"Whose, whose?" they all enquire, and none can
understand.

At length they come—and oh! how then rejoice
A wife and children at that welcome voice:
It is not theirs—but what have these to tell?
"Where did you leave the Captain—were they
well?"
Alas! they know not, they had felt an awe
In dread of death, and knew not what they saw.
Thus they depart.—The evening darker grows,
The lights shake wildly, and as wildly blows
The stormy night-wind: fear possesses all,
The hardest hearts, in this sad interval.

But hark again to voices loud and high!
Once more that hope, that dread, that agony,
That panting expectation! "Oh! reveal
"What must be known, and think what pangs we
feel!"

In vain they ask! The men now landed speak
Confused and quick, and to escape them seek.
Our female party on a sailor press,
But nothing learn that makes their terror less;
Nothing the man can show, or nothing will confess.
To some, indeed, they whisper, bringing news
For them alone, but others they refuse;
And steal away, as if they could not bear
The griefs they cause, and if they cause must share.

They too are gone! and our unhappy Three,
Half wild with fear, are trembling on the quay.
They can no ease, no peace, no quiet find,
The storm is gathering in the troubled mind;
Thoughts after thoughts in wild succession rise,
And all within is changing like the skies.
Their friends persuade them, "Do depart, we pray!"
They will not, must not, cannot go away,
But chill'd with icy fear, for certain tidings stay.

And now again there must a boat be seen—
Men run together! It must something mean!
Some figure moves upon the ousy bound
Where flows the tide—Oh! what can he have found—
What lost? And who is he?—The only one
Of the loved three—the Captain's younger son.
Their boat was fill'd and sank—He knows no more,
But that he only hardly reach'd the shore.
He saw them swimming—for he once was near—
But he was sinking, and he could not hear;
And then the waves curl'd round him, but at length,
He struck upon the boat with dying strength,
And that preserved him: when he turn'd around,
Nought but the dark, wild, billowy flood was found—
That flood was all he saw, that flood's the only sound—
Save that the angry wind, with ceaseless roar,
Dash'd the wild waves upon the rocky shore.

The Widows dwell together—so we call
The younger woman; widow'd are they all:

But she, the poor Elizabeth, it seems
Not life in her—she lives not, but she dreams;
She looks on Philip, and in him can find
Not much to mark in body or in mind—
He who was saved; and then her very soul
Is in that scene!—Her thoughts beyond control,
Fix'd on that night, and bearing her along,
Amid the waters terrible and strong;
Till there she sees within the troubled waves
The bodies sinking in their wat'ry graves,
When from her lover, yielding up his breath,
There comes a voice,—"Farewell, Elizabeth!"

Yet Resignation in the house is seen,
Subdued Affliction, Piety serene,
And Hope for ever striving to instil
The balm for grief—"It is the Heavenly will:"
And in that will our duty bids us rest,
For all that Heaven ordains is good, is best;
We sin and suffer—this alone we know,
Grief is our portion, is our part below;
But we shall rise, that world of bliss to see,
Where sin and suffering never more shall be.

TALE XIX.

MASTER WILLIAM.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XIX.

MASTER WILLIAM; OR, LAD'S LOVE.

I.

I HAVE remembrance of a BOY, whose mind
Was weak: he seem'd not for the world design'd,
Seem'd not as one who in that world could strive,
And keep his spirits even and alive—
A feeling BOY, and happy, though the less,
From that fine feeling, form'd for happiness.
His mother left him to his favourite ways,
And what he made his pleasure brought him praise

Romantic, tender, visionary, mild,
Affectionate, reflecting when a child,
With fear instinctive he from harshness fled,
And gentle tears for all who suffer'd shed;
Tales of misfortune touch'd his generous heart,
Of maidens left, and lovers forced to part.

In spite of all that weak indulgence wrought,
That love permitted, or that flattery taught,

In spite of teachers who no fault would find,
The Boy was neither selfish nor unkind.
Justice and truth his honest heart approved,
And all things lovely he admired and loved.
Arabian Nights, and Persian Tales, he read,
And his pure mind with brilliant wonders fed.
The long Romances, wild Adventures fired
His stirring thoughts: he felt like Boy inspired.
The cruel fight, the constant love, the art
Of vile magicians, thrill'd his inmost heart:
An early Quixote, dreaming dreadful sights
Of warring dragons, and victorious knights:
In every dream some beauteous Princess shone,
The pride of thousands, and the prize of one.

Not yet he read, nor reading, would approve,
The Novel's hero, or its ladies' love.
He would Sophia for a wanton take,
Jones for a wicked, nay a vulgar rake.
He would no time on Smollett's page bestow;
Such men he knew not, would disdain to know:
And if he read, he travell'd slowly on,
Teazed by the tame and faultless Grandison.
He in that hero's deeds could not delight—
"He loved two ladies, and he would not fight."
The minor works of this prolific kind
Presented beings he could never find;
Beings, he thought, that no man should describe,
A vile, intriguing, lying, perjured tribe,
With impious habits, and dishonest views;
The men he knew, had souls they feared to lose;

These had no views that could their sins controul,
With them nor fears nor hopes disturb'd the soul.

To dear Romance with fresh delight he turn'd,
And vicious men, like recreant cowards, spurn'd.

The Scripture Stories he with reverence read,
And duly took his Bible to his bed.
Yet Joshua, Samson, David, were a race
He dared not with his favourite heroes place.
Young as he was, the difference well he knew
Between the Truth, and what we fancy true.
He was with these entranced, of those afraid,
With Guy he triumph'd, but with David pray'd.

II.

P.— Such was the Boy, and what the man would be,
I might conjecture, but could not foresee.

F.— He has his trials met, his troubles seen,
And now deluded, now deserted, been.
His easy nature has been oft assail'd
By grief assumed, scorn hid, and flattery veil'd.

P.— But has he, safe and cautious, shunn'd the snares
That life presents?—I ask not of its cares.

F.— Your gentle Boy a course of life began,
That made him what he is, the gentle-man,

A man of business. He in courts presides
Among their Worships, whom his judgment guides.
He in the Temple studied, and came down
A very lawyer, though without a gown;
Still he is kind, but prudent, steady, just,
And takes but little that he hears on trust;
He has no visions now, no boyish plans;
All his designs and prospects are the man's,
The man of sound discretion—?

P.—How so made?
What could his mind to change like this persuade—
What first awaken'd our romantic friend—
For such he is—

F.—If you would know, attend.

In those gay years, when boys their manhood prove,
Because they talk of girls, and dream of love,
In William's way there came a maiden fair,
With soft, meek look, and sweet retiring air;
With just the rosy tint upon her cheek,
With sparkling eye, and tongue unused to speak;
With manner decent, quiet, chaste, that one,
Modest himself, might love to look upon,
As William look'd; and thus the gentle Squire
Began the Nymph, albeit poor, t' admire.
She was, to wit, the gardener's niece; her place
Gave to her care the Lady's silks and lace;
With other duties of an easy kind,
And left her time, as much she felt inclined,
T' adorn her graceful form, and fill her craving mind;

Nay, left her leisure to employ some hours
Of the long day, among her uncle's flowers —
Myrtle and rose, of which she took the care,
And was as sweet as pinks and lilies are.

Such was the damsel whom our Youth beheld
With passion unencouraged, unrepell'd;
For how encourage what was not in view?
Or how repel what strove not to pursue?

What books inspired, or glowing fancy wrought,
What dreams suggested, or reflection taught,
Whate'er of love was to the mind convey'd,
Was all directed to his darling maid.
He saw his damsel with a lover's eyes,
As pliant fancy wove the fair disguise;
A Quixote he, who in his nymph could trace
The high-born beauty, changed and — out of place.
That William loved, mamma, with easy smile,
Would jesting say; but love *might* grow the while;
The damsel's self, with unassuming pride,
With love so led by fear was gratified.

What cause for censure? Could a man reprove
A child for fondness, or miscall it love?
Not William's self; yet well inform'd was he,
That love it was, and endless love would be.
Month after month the sweet delusion bred
Wild feverish hopes, that flourish'd, and then fled,
Like Fanny's sweetest flower, and that was lost
In one cold hour, by one harsh morning frost.

In some soft evenings, mid the garden's bloom,
Would William wait, till Fanny chanced to come;
And Fanny came, by chance it may be; still,
There was a gentle bias of the will,
Such as the soundest minds may act upon,
When motives of superior kind are gone.
There then they met, and Master William's look
Was the less timid, for he held a book;
And when the sweetness of the evening hours,
The fresh soft air, the beauty of the flowers,
The night-bird's note, the gently falling dew,
Were all discuss'd, and silence would ensue,
There were some lovely Lines — if she could stay —
And Fanny rises not to go away.

" Young Paris was the shepherd's pride,
As well the fair Ænone knew;
They sat the mountain stream beside,
And o'er the bank a poplar grew.

" Upon its bark this verse he traced, —
Bear witness to the vow I make;
Thou, Xanthus, to thy source shalt haste,
E'er I my matchless maid forsake.

" No prince or peasant lad am I,
Nor crown nor crook to me belong,
But I will love thee till I die,
And die before I do thee wrong.

"Back to thy source now, Xanthus, run,
Paris is now a prince of Troy;
He leaves the Fair his flattery won,
Himself and country to destroy.

"He seizes on a sovereign's wife,
The pride of Greece, and with her flies;
He causes thus a ten years' strife,
And with his dying parent dies.

"Oh! think me not this Shepherd's Boy,
Who from the Maid he loves would run:
Oh! think me not a Prince of Troy,
By whom such treacherous deeds are done."

The Lines were read, and many an idle word
Pronounced with emphasis, and underscored,
As if the writer had resolved that all
His nouns and verbs should be emphatical.
But what they were the damsel little thought,
The sense escaped her, but the voice she caught;
Soft, tender, trembling, and the gipsy felt
As if by listening she unfairly dealt:
For she, if not mamma, had rightly guess'd,
That William's bosom was no seat of rest.

But Love's young hope must die.—There was a day,
When nature smiled, and all around was gay;
The Boy o'ertook the damsel as she went
The village road—unknown was her intent;

He, happy hour, when lock'd in Fanny's arm,
Walk'd on enamour'd, every look a charm;
Yet her soft looks were but her heart's disguise,
There was no answering love in Fanny's eyes:
But, or by prudence or by pity moved,
She thought it time his folly was reproved;
Then took her measures, not perchance without
Some conscious pride in what she was about.

Along the brook, with gentle pace they go,
The Youth unconscious of th' impending woe;
And oft he urged the absent Maid to talk,
As she was wont in many a former walk;
And still she slowly walk'd beside the brook,
Or look'd around — for what could Fanny look?
Something there must be! What, did not appear;
But William's eye betray'd the anxious fear;
The cause unseen! ——
But who, with giant-stride,
Bounds o'er the brook, and is at Fanny's side?
Who takes her arm? and oh! what villain dares
To press those lips? Not even her lips he spares!
Nay, she herself, the Fanny, the divine,
Lip to his lip can wickedly incline!
The lad, unnerved by horror, with an air
Of wonder quits her arm and looks despair;
Nor will proceed. Oh no! he must return,
Though his drown'd sight cannot the path discern.

"Come, Master William! come, Sir, let us on.
"What can you fear? You 're not afraid of John?"

"What ails our youngster?" quoth the burly swain,
Six feet in height—but he inquires in vain.
William, in deep resentment, scans the frame
Of the fond giant, and abhors his name;
Thinks him a demon of th' infernal brood,
And longs to shed his most pernicious blood.

Again the monster spake in thoughtless joy,—
"We shall be married soon, my pretty Boy!
"And dwell in Madam's cottage, where you 'll see
"The strawberry-beds, and cherries on the tree."

Back to his home in silent scorn return'd
Th' indignant Boy, and all endearment spurn'd.
Fanny perforce with Master takes her way,
But finds him to th' o'erwhelming grief a prey,
Wrapt in resentful silence, till he came
Where he might vent his woes, and hide his shame.

Fierce was his strife, but with success he strove,
And freed his troubled breast from fruitless love;
Or what of love his reason fail'd to cool
Was lost and perish'd in a public school,—
Those seats and sources both of good and ill,
By what they cure in Boys, and what they kill.

TALE XX.

THE WILL.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XX.

THE WILL.

I.

THUS to his Friend an angry Father spoke —
" Nay, do not think that I the WILL revoke.
" My cruel Son in every way I 've tried,
" And every vice have found in him but pride;
" For he, of pride possess'd, would meaner vices
hide.
" Money he wastes, I will not say he spends;
" He neither makes the poor nor rich his friends —
" To those he nothing gives, to these he never lends.

" 'T is for himself each legal pale he breaks;
" He joins the miser's spirit to the rake's:
" Like the worst Roman in the worst of times,
" He can be guilty of conflicting crimes;
" Greedy of others' wealth, unknown the use,
" And of his own contemptuously profuse.

" To such a mind shall I my wealth confide,
" That you to nobler, worthier ends, may guide?

" No! let my Will my scorn of vice express,
" And let him learn repentance from distress."

So said the Father; and the Friend, who spurn'd
Wealth ill-acquired, his sober speech return'd —
" The youth is faulty, but his faults are weigh'd
" With a strong bias, and by wrath repaid;
" Pleasure deludes him, not the vain design
" Of making vices unallied combine.
" He wastes your wealth, for he is yet a boy;
" He covets more, for he would more enjoy.
" For, my good friend, believe me, very few,
" At once are prodigals and misers too—
" The spendthrift vice engrafted on the Jew.
" Leave me one thousand pounds; for I confess
" I have my wants, and will not tax you less.
" But your estate let this young man enjoy;
" If he reforms you 've saved a grateful boy,
" If not, a father's cares and troubles cease,
" You 've done your duty, and may rest in peace."

The Will in hand, the Father musing stood,
Then gravely answered, " Your advice is good;
" Yet take the paper, and in safety keep;
" I 'll make another Will before I sleep;
" But if I hear of some atrocious deed,
" That deed I'll burn, and yours will then succeed.
" Two thousand I bequeath you. No reproof!
" And there are small bequests — he'll have enough;
" For if he wastes, he would with all be poor,
" And if he wastes not, he will need no more."

The Friends then parted: this the Will possess'd,
And that another made—so things had rest.

George, who was conscious that his Father grew
Sick and infirm, engaged in nothing new;
No letters came from injured man or maid,
No bills from wearied duns, that must be paid,
No fierce reproaches from deserted fair,
Mixed with wild tenderness of desperate prayer;
So hope rose softly in the parent's breast:
He dying called his son and fondly blest,
Hailed the propitious tear, and mildly sunk to rest.

Unhappy Youth! e'er yet the tomb was closed,
And dust to dust convey'd in peace repos'd,
He sought his father's closet, search'd around,
To find a Will: the important Will was found.

Well pleased he read, "These lands, this manor, all,
"Now call me master!—I obey the call."
Then from the window look'd the valley o'er,
And never saw it look so rich before.
He viewed the dairy, view'd the men at plough,
With other eyes, with other feelings now,
And with a new-formed taste found beauty in a cow.
The distant swain who drove the plough along
Was a good useful slave, and passing strong!
In short, the view was pleasing, nay, was fine,
"Good as my father's, excellent as mine!"

Again he reads, — but he had read enough ;
What followed put his virtue to a proof.
" How this? to David Wright two thousand pounds !
" A monstrous sum ! beyond all reason ! — zounds !
" This is your friendship running out of bounds.

" Then here are cousins Susan, Robert, Joe,
" Five hundred each. Do they deserve it? No !
" Claim they have none — I wonder if they know
" What the good man intended to bestow !
" This might be paid — but Wright's enormous sum
" Is — I 'm alone — there 's nobody can come —
" 'T is all his hand, no lawyer was employ'd
" To write this prose, that ought to be destroy'd !
" To no attorney would my father trust :
" He wished his son to judge of what was just ;
" As if he said, ' My boy will find the Will,
" ' And, as he likes, destroy it or fulfil.'
" This now is reason, this I understand —
" What was at his, is now at my command.
" As for this paper, with these cousiny names,
" I — 't is *my* Will — commit it to the flames.
" Hence ! disappear ! now am I lord alone :
" They 'll groan, I know, but, curse them, let them groan.
" Who wants his money like a new made heir,
" To put all things in order and repair?
" I need the whole the worthy man could save,
" To do my father credit in his grave :
" It takes no trifle to have squires convey'd
" To their last house with honour and parade.

" All this, attended by a world of cost,
" Requires, demands, that nothing should be lost.
" These fond bequests cannot demanded be—
" Where no Will is, can be no legacy;
" And none is here! I safely swear it—none!—
" The very ashes are dispersed and gone.
" All would be well, would that same sober Friend,
" That Wright, my father on his way attend:
" My fears — but why afraid? — my troubles then
would end."

In triumph, yet in trouble, meets our Squire
The friends assembled, who a Will require.
" There is no Will," he said.—They murmur and
retire.

Days pass away, while yet the Heir is blest
By pleasant cares, and thoughts that banish rest;
When comes the Friend, and asks, in solemn tone,
If he may see the busy Squire alone.

They are in private —all about is still—
When thus the Guest:—" Your father left a Will,
" And I would see it."—Rising in reply,
The youth beheld a fix'd and piercing eye,
From which his own receded; and the sound
Of his own words was in disorder drown'd.
He answered softly,—" I in vain have spent
" Days in the search; I pray you be content;
" And if a Will——" The pertinacious Man,
At *if* displeased, with steady tone began,—
" There *is* a Will—produce it, for you can."—

" Sir, I have sought in vain, and what the use?
" What has no being, how can I produce?"—

" Two days I give you; to my words attend,"
Was the reply, " and let the business end."

Two days were past, and still the same reply
To the same question—" Not a Will have I."
More grave, more earnest, then the Friend appear'd:
He spoke with power, as one who would be heard,—
" A Will your father made! I witness'd one."
The Heir arose in anger—" Sir, begone!
" Think you my spirit by your looks to awe?
" Go to your lodgings, friend, or to your law:
" To what would you our easy souls persuade?
" Once more I tell you, not a Will was made:
" There's none with me, I swear it—now, deny
" This if you can!"—
" That, surely, cannot I;
" Nay, I believe you, and, as no such deed
" Is found with you, *this* surely will succeed!"—

He said, and from his pocket slowly drew
Of the first testament a copy true,
And held it spread abroad, that he might see it too.
" Read, and be sure; your parent's pleasure see—
" Then leave this mansion and these lands to me."

He said, and terror seized the guilty youth;
He saw his misery, meanness, and the truth;
Could not before his stern accuser stand,
Yet could not quit that hall, that park, that land;

But when surprise had pass'd away, his grief
Began to think in law to find relief.

" While courts are open, why should I despair?
" Juries will feel for an abandon'd heir:
" I will resist," he said, impell'd by pride;—
" I must submit," recurring fear replied.
As wheels the vane when winds around it play,
So his strong passions turn'd him every way;
But growing terrors seized th' unhappy youth:
He knew the Man, and more, he knew—the Truth.
When, stung by all he fear'd, and all he felt,
He sought for mercy, and in terror knelt.

Grieved, but indignant,—" Let me not despise
" Thy father's son," replied the Friend: " arise!
" To my fix'd purpose your attention lend,
" And know, your fate will on yourself depend.

" Thou shalt not want, young man! nor yet abound,
" And time shall try thee, if thy heart be sound;
" Thou shalt be watch'd till thou hast learn'd to know
" Th' All-seeing Watcher of the world below,
" And worlds above, and thoughts within; from Whom
" Must be thy certain, just, and final doom.
" Thy doors all closely barr'd, thy windows blind,
" Before all silent, silent all behind—
" Thy hand was stretch'd to do whate'er thy soul
" In secret would—no mortal could controul.
" Oh, fool! to think that thou thy act could'st keep
" From that All-piercing Eye, which cannot sleep!

"Go to thy trial! and may I with thee,
"A fellow-sinner, who to mercy flee —
"That mercy find, as justly I dispense
"Between thy frailty and thy penitence.

"Go to thy trial! and be wise in time,
"And know that no man can conceal a crime.
"God and his Conscience witness all that's done,
"And these he cannot cheat, he cannot shun.
"What, then, could fortune, what could safety give,
"If He with these at enmity must live?

"Go!" — and the young man from his presence went,
Confused, uncertain of his own intent —
To sin, if pride prevail'd; if soften'd, to repent.

II.

P. — Lives yet the Friend of that unhappy Boy,
Who could the Will that made him rich destroy,
And made him poor? And what the after-plan,
For one so selfish, of that stern, good man?

F. — "Choose," said this Friend, "thy way in life, and I
"Will means to aid thee in thy work supply."
He will the army, thought this guardian, choose,
And there the sense of his dishonour lose.

Humbly he answer'd,—"With your kind consent,
"Of your estate I would a portion rent,
"And farm with care——"
"Alas! the wretched fruit
"Of evil habit! he will hunt and shoot."

So judged the Friend, but soon perceived a change,
To him important, and to all men strange.
Industrious, temperate, with the sun he rose,
And of his time gave little to repose:
Nor to the labour only bent his will,
But sought experience, and improved with skill;
With cautious prudence placed his gains to use,
Inquiring always, "What will this produce?"

The Friend, not long suspicious, now began
To think more kindly of the alter'd man—
In his opinion alter'd, but, in truth,
The same the spirit that still ruled the youth:
That dwelt within, where other demons dwell,
Avarice unsated, and insatiable.

But this Wright saw not: he was more inclined
To trace the way of a repenting mind;
And he was now by strong disease assail'd,
That quickly o'er the vital powers prevail'd:
And now the son had all, was rich beyond
His fondest hope, and he, indeed, was fond.

His life's great care has been his zeal to prove,
And time to dotage has increased his love.

A Miser now, the one strong passion guides
The heart and soul: there's not a love besides.
Where'er he comes, he sees in every face
A look that tells him of his own disgrace.
Men's features vary, but the mildest show
"It is a tale of infamy we know."
Some with contempt the wealthy miser view,
Some with disgust, yet mix'd with pity too;
A part the looks of wrath and hatred wear,
And some, less happy, lose their scorn in fear.

Meanwhile, devoid of kindness, comfort, friends,
On his possessions solely he depends.

Yet is he wretched; for his fate decrees
That his own feelings should deny him ease.
With talents gifted, he himself reproves,
And can but scorn the vile pursuit he loves;
He can but feel that there abides within
The secret shame, the unrepented sin,
And the strong sense, that bids him to confess
He has not found the way to happiness.

But 't is the way where he has travell'd long,—
And turn he will not, though he feels it wrong;
Like a sad traveller, who, at closing day,
Finds he has wander'd widely from his way,
Yet wanders on, nor will new paths explore,
Till the night falls, and he can walk no more.

TALE XXI.

THE COUSINS.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XXI.

THE COUSINS.

I.

P.—I LEFT a frugal Merchant, who began
Early to thrive, and grew a wealthy man;
Retired from business with a favourite Niece,
He lived in plenty, or if not—in peace.
Their small affairs, conforming to his will,
The maiden managed with superior skill.
He had a Nephew too, a brother's child,—
But James offended, for the lad was wild:
And Patty's tender soul was vex'd to hear,
"Your Cousin James will rot in gaol, my dear;
"And now, I charge you, by no kind of gift
"Show him that folly may be help'd by thrift."
This Patty heard, but in her generous mind
Precept so harsh could no admission find.

Her Cousin James, too sure in prison laid,
With strong petitions plied the gentle maid,
That she would humbly on their Uncle press
His deep repentance, and his sore distress;

How that he mourn'd in durance, night and day,
And which removed, he would for ever pray.

"Nought will I give, his worthless life to save,"
The Uncle said; and nought in fact he gave:
But the kind maiden from her pittance took
All that she could, and gave with pitying look;
For soft compassion in her bosom reign'd,
And her heart melted when the Youth complain'd.
Of his complaints the Uncle loved to hear,
As Patty told them, shedding many a tear;
While he would wonder how the girl could pray
For a young rake, to place him in her way,
Or once admit him in his Uncle's view;
"But these," said he, "are things that women do."

Thus were the Cousins, young, unguarded, fond,
Bound in true friendship — so they named the bond —
Nor call'd it love — and James resolved, when free,
A most correct and frugal man to be.
He sought her prayers, but not for heavenly aid:
"Pray to my Uncle," and she kindly pray'd —
"James will be careful," said the Niece; "and I
"Will be as careful," was the stern reply.

Thus he resisted, and I know not how
He could be soften'd — Is he kinder now?
Hard was his heart; but yet a heart of steel
May melt in dying, and dissolving feel.

II.

F.—What were his feelings I cannot explain,
His actions only on my mind remain.
He never married, that indeed we know,
But childless was not, as his foes could show.—
Perhaps his friends—for friends, as well as foes,
Will the infirmities of man disclose.

When young, our Merchant, though of sober fame,
Had a rude passion that he could not tame;
And, not to dwell upon the passion's strife,
He had a Son, who never had a wife;
The father paid just what the law required,
Nor saw the infant, nor to see desired.
That infant, thriving on the parish fare,
Without a parent's love, consent, or care,
Became a sailor, and sustain'd his part
So like a man, it touch'd his father's heart:—
He for protection gave the ready pay,
And placed the seaman in preferment's way;
Who doubted not, with sanguine heart, to rise,
And bring home riches, gain'd from many a prize.
But Jack—for so we call'd him—Jack once more,
And never after, touch'd his native shore:
Nor was it known if he in battle fell,
Or sickening died—we sought, but none could tell.
The father sigh'd—as some report, he wept;
And then his sorrow with the Sailor slept;
Then age came on; he found his spirits droop,
And his kind Niece remain'd the only hope.

Premising this, our story then proceeds—
Our gentle Patty for her Cousin pleads;
And now her Uncle, to his room confined,
And kindly nursed, was soften'd and was kind.
James, whom the law had from his prison sent,
With much contrition to his Uncle went,
And, humbly kneeling, said, "Forgive me, I repent."
Reproach, of course, his humbled spirit bore;
He knew for pardon anger opes the door;
The man whom we with too much warmth reprove,
Has the best chance our softening hearts to move;
And this he had—"Why, Patty, love! it seems,"
Said the old man, "there's something good in James:
"I must forgive; but you my child, are yet,
"My stay and prop; I cannot this forget.
"Still, my dear Niece, as a reforming man,
"I mean to aid your Cousin, if I can."
Then Patty smiled, for James and she had now
Time for their loves, and pledged the constant vow.

James the fair way to favouring thoughts discern'd—
He learn'd the news, and told of all he learn'd;
Read all the papers in an easy style,
And knew the bits would raise his Uncle's smile;
Then would refrain, to hear the good man say,
"You did not come as usual yesterday:
"I must not take you from your duties, lad,
"But of your daily visits should be glad!"

Patty was certain that their Uncle now
Would their affection all it ask'd allow;

She was convinced her lover now would find
The past forgotten and old Uncle kind.
" It matters not," she added, " who receives
" The larger portion; what to one he leaves
" We both inherit! let us nothing hide,
" Dear James, from him in whom we both confide."

" Not for your life!" quoth James. " Let Uncle choose
" Our ways for us—or we the way shall lose.
" For know you, Cousin, all these miser men——"
" Nay, my dear James!"—
" Our worthy Uncle, then,
" And all like Uncle like to be obey'd
" By their dependants, who must seem afraid
" Of their own will:—If we to wed incline,
" You'll quickly hear him peevishly repine,
" Object, dispute, and sundry reasons give,
" To prove we ne'er could find the means to live;
" And then, due credit for his speech to gain,
" He'll leave us poor—lest wealth should prove it vain.
" Let him propose the measure, and then we
" May for his pleasure to his plan agree.
" I, when at last assenting, shall be still
" But giving way to a kind Uncle's will;
" Then will he deem it just, amends to make
" To one who ventures all things for his sake;
" So, should you deign to take this worthless hand,
" Be sure, dear Patty, 't is at his command."

But Patty questioned—" Is it, let me ask,
" The will of God that we should wear a mask?"

This startled James: he lifted up his eyes,
And said with some contempt, besides surprise,
" Patty, my love! the will of God, 'tis plain,
" Is that we live by what we can obtain;
" Shall we a weak and foolish man offend,
" And when our trial is so near our end?"

This hurt the maiden, and she said, " 'Tis well!
" Unask'd I will not of your purpose tell,
" But will not lie."—
" Lie! Patty, no, indeed,
" Your downright lying never will succeed!
" A better way our prudence may devise,
" Than such unprofitable things as lies.
" Yet, a dependant, if he would not starve,
" The way through life must with discretion carve,
" And, though a lie he may with pride disdain,
" He must not every useless truth maintain.
" If one respect to these fond men would show,
" Conceal the facts that give them pain to know;
" While all that pleases may be placed in view,
" And if it be not, they will think it true."

The humble Patty dropp'd a silent tear,
And said, " Indeed, 't is best to be sincere."
James answer'd not—there could be no reply
To what he would not grant, nor could deny:
But from that time he in the maiden saw
What he condemn'd; yet James was kept in awe;
He felt her virtue, but was sore afraid
For the frank blunders of the virtuous maid.

Meantime he daily to his Uncle read
The news, and to his favourite subjects led:
If closely press'd, he sometimes staid to dine,
Eat of one dish, and drank one glass of wine;
For James was crafty grown, and felt his way
To favour, step by step, and day by day;
He talk'd of business, till the Uncle prized
The lad's opinion, whom he once despised,
And, glad to see him thus his faults survive,
" This Boy," quoth he, " will keep our name alive.
" Women are weak, and Patty, though the best
" Of her weak sex, is woman like the rest:
" An idle husband will her money spend,
" And bring my hard-earn'd savings to an end."

Far as he dared, his Nephew this way led,
And told his tales of lasses rashly wed,
Told them as matters that he heard, — " He knew
" Not where," he said: " they might be false or true;
" One must confess that girls are apt to dote
" On the bright scarlet of a coxcomb's coat;
" And that with ease a woman they beguile
" With a fool's flattery, or a rascal's smile;
" But then," he added, fearing to displease,
" Our Patty never saw such men as these."

" True! but she may — some scoundrel may command
" The girl's whole store, if he can gain her hand:
" Her very goodness will itself deceive,
" And her weak virtue help her to believe;
" Yet she is kind; and, Nephew! go, and say,
" I need her now — You 'll come another day."

In such discourses, while the maiden went
About her household, many an hour was spent,
Till James was sure that when his Uncle died,
He should at least the property divide:
Nor long had he to wait—the fact was quickly tried.

The Uncle now to his last bed confined,
To James and Patty his affairs resign'd;
The doctor took his final fee in hand,
The man of law received his last command;
The silent priest sat watching in his chair,
If he might wake the dying man to prayer,—
When the last groan was heard; then all was still,
And James indulged his musings—on the Will.

This in due time was read, and Patty saw
Her own dear Cousin made the heir-by-law.
Something indeed was hers, but yet she felt
As if her Uncle had not kindly dealt;
And but that James was one whom she could trust,
She would have thought it cruel and unjust.
Ev'n as it was, it gave her some surprise,
And tears unbidden started in her eyes;
Yet she confess'd it was the same to her,
And it was likely men would men prefer.
Loth was the Niece to think her Uncle wrong;
And other thoughts engaged her—"Is it long
"That custom bids us tarry ere we wed,
"When a kind Uncle is so lately dead?
"At any rate," the maiden judged, "'t is he
"That first will speak—it does not rest with me."

James to the Will his every thought confined,
And found some parts that vex'd his sober mind.
He, getting much, to angry thoughts gave way,
For the poor pittance that he had to pay,
With Patty's larger claim. Save these alone,
The weeping heir beheld the whole his own;
Yet something painful in his mind would dwell,—
"It was not likely, but was possible:"—
No—Fortune lately was to James so kind,
He was determined not to think her blind:
"She saw his merit, and would never throw
"His prospects down by such malicious blow."

Patty, meanwhile, had quite enough betray'd
Of her own mind to make her James afraid
Of one so simply pure: his hardening heart
Inclined to anger—he resolved to part:
Why marry Patty?—if he look'd around,
More advantageous matches might be found;
But though he might a richer wife command,
He first must break her hold upon his hand.

She with a spinster-friend retired awhile,
"Not long," she said, and said it with a smile.
Not so had James determined:—He essay'd
To move suspicion in the gentle maid.
Words not succeeding, he design'd to pass
The spinster's window with some forward lass.
If in her heart so pure no pang was known,
At least he might affect it in his own.
There was a brother of her friend, and he,
Though poor and rude, might serve for jealousy.

If all should fail, he, though of schemes bereft,
Might leave her yet! — They fail'd, and she was left.

Poor Patty bore it with a woman's mind,
And with an angel's, sorrowing and resign'd.
Ere this in secret long she wept and pray'd,
Long tried to think her lover but delay'd
The union, once his hope, his prayer, his pride;—
She could in James as in herself confide:
Was he not bound by all that man can bind,
In love, in honour, to be just and kind?
Large was his debt, and when their debts are large,
The ungrateful cancel what the just discharge;
Nor payment only in their pride refuse,
But first they wrong their friend, and then accuse.
Thus Patty finds her bosom's claims denied,
Her love insulted, and her right defied.
She urged it not; her claim the maid withdrew,
For maiden pride would not the wretch pursue:
She sigh'd to find him false, herself so good and true.

Now all his fears, at least the present, still, —
He talk'd, good man! about his uncle's will, —
"All unexpected," he declared, — "surprised
"Was he — and his good uncle ill-advised:
"He no such luck had look'd for, he was sure,
"Nor such deserved," he said, with look demure;
"He did not merit such exceeding love,
"But his, he meant, so help him God, to prove."
And he has proved it! all his cares and schemes
Have proved the exceeding love James bears to James.

But to proceed,—for we have yet the facts
That show how Justice looks on wicked acts;
For, though not always, she at times appears —
To wake in man her salutary fears.

James, restless grown — for no such mind can rest —
Would build a house, that should his wealth attest;
In fact, he saw, in many a clouded face,
A certain token of his own disgrace;
And wish'd to overawe the murmurs of the place.

The finish'd building show'd the master's wealth,
And noisy workmen drank his Honour's health—
"His and his heirs" — and at the thoughtless word
A strange commotion in his bosom stirr'd.
"Heirs! said the idiots?"—and again that clause
In the strange Will corrected their applause.

Prophetic fears! for now reports arose
That spoil'd "his Honour's" comforts and repose.
A stout young Sailor, though in battle maim'd,
Arrived in port, and his possessions claim'd.
The Will he read: he stated his demand,
And his attorney grasp'd at house and land.
The Will provided—"If my son survive,
He shall inherit;" and lo! Jack 's alive!
Yes! he was that lost lad, preserved by fate,
And now was bent on finding his estate.
But claim like this the angry James denied,
And to the law the sturdy heir applied.

James did what men when placed like him would do—
Avow'd his right, and fee'd his lawyer too:
The Will, indeed, provided for a son;
But was this Sailor youth the very one?

Ere Jack's strong proofs in all their strength were shown,
To gain a part James used a milder tone;
But the instructed tar would reign alone.

At last he reign'd: to James a large bequest
Was frankly dealt; the Seaman had the rest—
Save a like portion to the gentle Niece,
Who lived in comfort, and regain'd her peace.
In her neat room her talent she employ'd,
With more true peace than ever James enjoy'd.
The young, the aged, in her praise agreed—
Meek in her manner, bounteous in her deed;
The very children their respect avow'd:
"'T was the good lady," they were told, and bow'd.

The merry Seaman much the maid approv'd,—
Nor that alone—he like a seaman loved;
Loved as a man who did not much complain,
Loved like a sailor, not a sighing swain;
Had heard of wooing maids, but knew not how—
"Lass, if you love me, prithee tell me now,"
Was his address—but this was nothing cold—
"Tell if you love me;" and she smiled and told.

He brought her presents, such as sailors buy,
Glittering like gold, to please a maiden's eye,
All silk, and silver, fringe and finery:

These she accepted in respect to him,
And thought but little of the missing limb.
Of this he told her, for he loved to tell
A warlike tale, and judged he told it well:—
" You mark me, love! the French were two to one,
" And so, you see, they were ashamed to run;
" We fought an hour; and then there came the shot
" That struck me here — a man must take his lot; —
" A minute after, and the Frenchman struck:
" One minute sooner had been better luck;
" But if you can a crippled cousin like,
" You ne'er shall see him for a trifle strike."

Patty, whose gentle heart was not so nice
As to reject the thought of loving twice,
Judged her new Cousin was by nature kind,
With no suspicions in his honest mind,
Such as our virtuous ladies now and then
Find strongly floating in the minds of men.
So they were married, and the lasses vow'd
That Patty's luck would make an angel proud:
" Not but that time would come when she must prove
" That men are men, no matter how they love:" —
And she has prov'd it; for she finds her man
As kind and true as when their loves began.

James is unhappy; not that he is poor,
But, having much, because he has no more;
Because a rival's pleasure gives him pain;
Because his vices work'd their way in vain;

And, more than these, because he sees the smile
Of a wrong'd woman pitying man so vile.

He sought an office, serves in the excise,
And every wish, but that for wealth, denies;
Wealth is the world to him, and he is worldly wise.
But disappointment in his face appears;
Care and vexation, sad regret and fears
Have fix'd on him their fangs, and done the work of years.

Yet grows he wealthy in a strange degree,
And neighbours wonder how the fact can be:
He lives alone, contracts a sordid air,
And sees with sullen grief the cheerful pair;
Feels a keen pang, as he beholds the door
Where peace abides, and mutters,—"*I am poor!*"

TALE XXII.

PREACHING AND PRACTICE.

[*Farewell and Return.*]

TALE XXII.

PREACHING AND PRACTICE.

I.

P.—What I have ask'd are questions that relate
To those once known, that I might learn their fate.
But there was One, whom though I scarcely knew,
Much do I wish to learn his fortunes too.
Yet what expect?—He was a rich man's Heir,
His conduct doubtful, but his prospects fair;
Thoughtless and brave, extravagant and gay,
Wild as the wind, and open as the day;
His freaks and follies were a thousand times
Brought full in view: I heard not of his crimes.
Like our Prince Hal, his company he chose
Among the lawless, of restraint the foes;
But though to their poor pleasures he could stoop,
He was not, rumour said, their victim-dupe.

His mother's Sister was a maiden prim,
Pious and poor, and much in debt to him.
This she repaid with volumes of reproof,
And sage advice, till he would cry "Enough!"

His father's Brother no such hints allow'd, —
Peevish and rich, and insolent and proud,
Of stern, strong spirit: Him the Youth withstood,
At length, "Presume not (said he) on our blood;
"Treat with politeness him whom you advise,
"Nor think I fear your doting prophecies;"
And fame has told of many an angry word,
When anger this, and that contempt had stirr'd.

"Boy! thou wilt beg thy bread, I plainly see."—
"Upbraid not, Uncle! till I beg of thee."

"Oh! thou wilt run to ruin and disgrace."—
"What! and so kind an Uncle in the place?"

"Nay, for I hold thee stranger to my blood."—
"Then must I treat thee as a stranger would:
"For if you throw the tie of blood aside,
"You must the roughness of your speech abide."

"What! to your father's Brother do you give
"A challenge?—Mercy! in what times we live!"

Now, I confess, the youth who could supply
Thus that poor Spinster, and could thus defy
This wealthy Uncle;—who could mix with them
Whom his strong sense and feeling must condemn,
And in their follies his amusement find,
Yet never lose the vigour of his mind—
A youth like this, with much we must reprove,
Had something still to win esteem and love.

Perhaps he lives not; but he seem'd not made
To pass through life entirely in the shade.

F. — Suppose you saw him, — does your mind retain
So much, that you would know the man again?
Yet hold in mind, he may have felt the press
Of grief or guilt, the withering of distress;
He now may show the stamp of woe and pain,
And nothing of his lively cast remain.

Survey these features — see if nothing there
May old impressions on your mind repair!
Is there not something in this shattered frame
Like to that —

P. — No! not like it, but the same;
That eye so brilliant, and that smile so gay,
Are lighted up, and sparkle through decay.

But may I question? Will you that allow?
There was a difference, and there must be now;
And yet, permitted, I would gladly hear
What must have pass'd in many a troubled year.

F. — Then hear my tale; but I the price demand;
That understood, I too must understand
Thy wanderings through, or sufferings in the land;
And, if our virtues cannot much produce,
Perhaps our errors may be found of use.

To all the wealth my Father's care laid by,
I added wings, and taught it how to fly.
To him that act had been of grievous sight,
But he survived not to behold the flight.
Strange doth it seem to grave and sober minds,
How the dear vice the simple votary blinds,
So that he goes to ruin smoothly on,
And scarcely feels he's going, till he's gone.

I had made over, in a lucky hour,
Funds for my Aunt, and placed beyond my power:
The rest was flown, I speak it with remorse,
And now a pistol seem'd a thing in course.

But though its precepts I had not obey'd,
Thoughts of my Bible made me much afraid
Of such rebellion, and though not content,
I must live on when life's supports were spent;
Nay, I must eat, and of my frugal Aunt
Must grateful take what gracious she would grant;
And true, she granted, but with much discourse;
Oh! with what words did she her sense enforce!
Great was her wonder, in my need that I
Should on the prop myself had raised rely —
I, who provided for her in my care,
"Must be assured how little she could spare!"

I stood confounded, and with angry tone,
With rage and grief, that blended oath and groan,
I fled her presence — yet I saw her air
Of resignation, and I heard her prayer;

"Now Heaven," she utter'd, "make his burden light!"—
And I, in parting, cried, "Thou hypocrite!"

But I was wrong — she might have meant to pray;
Though not to give her soul — her cash — away.

Of course, my Uncle would the spendthrift shun;
So friends on earth I now could reckon none.

One morn I rambled, thinking of the past,
Far in the country — Did you ever fast
Through a long summer's day? or, sturdy, go
To pluck the crab, the bramble, and the sloe,
The hyp, the cornel, and the beech, the food
And the wild solace of the gypsy brood?
To pick the cress embrown'd by summer sun,
From the dry bed where streams no longer run?
Have you, like school-boy, mingling play and toil,
Dug for the ground-nut, and enjoy'd the spoil?
Or chafed with feverish hand the ripening wheat,
Resolved to fast, and yet compell'd to eat?

Say, did you this, and drink the crystal spring,
And think yourself an abdicated king,
Driv'n from your state by a rebellious race?
And in your pride contending with disgrace,
Could you your hunger in your anger lose,
And call the ills you bear the ways you choose?

Thus on myself depending, I began
To feel the pride of a neglected man;

Not yet correct, but still I could command
Unshaken nerves, and a determined hand.

"Lo! men at work!" I said, "and I a man
"Can work! I feel it is my pride, I can."
This said, I wander'd on, and join'd the poor,
Assumed a labourer's dress, and was no more
Than labour made — Upon the road I broke
Stones for my bread, and startled at the stroke;
But every day the labour seem'd more light,
And sounder, sweeter still the sleep of every night.

"Thus will I live," I cried, "nor more return
"To herd with men, whose love and hate I spurn.
"All creatures toil; the beast, if tamed or free,
"Must toil for daily sustenance like me;
"The feather'd people hunt as well as sing,
"And catch their flying food upon the wing.
"The fish, the insect, all who live, employ
"Their powers to keep on life, or to enjoy,
"Their life th' enjoyment; thus will I proceed,
"A man from man's detested favours freed."

Thus was I reasoning, when at length there came
A gift, a present, but without a name.
"That Spinster-witch, has she then found a way
"To cure her conscience, and her Nephew pay,
"And sends her pittance? Well, and let it buy
"What sweetens labour; need I this deny?
"I thank her not; it is as if I found
"The fairy-gift upon this stony ground."

Still I wrought on; again occurred the day,
And then the same addition to my pay.

Then, lo! another Friend, if not the same,
For that I knew not, with a message came—
"Canst keep accounts?" the man was pleased to ask—
"I could not cash!—but that the harder task."
"Yet try," he said; and I was quickly brought,
To Lawyer Snell, and in his office taught.
Not much my pay, but my desires were less,
And I for evil days reserved th' excess.

Such day occurr'd not: quickly came there one,
When I was told my present work was done:
My Friend then brought me to a building large,
And gave far weightier business to my charge.
There I was told I had accounts to keep,
Of those vast Works, where wonders never sleep,
Where spindles, bobbins, rovings, threads, and pins,
Made up the complex mass that ever spins.

There, at my desk, in my six feet of room,
I noted every power of every loom;
Sounds of all kinds I heard from mortal lungs—
Eternal battle of unwearied tongues,
The jar of men and women, girls and boys,
And the huge Babel's own dull whirring grinding noise.

My care was mark'd, and I had soon in charge
Important matters, and my pay was large.

I at my fortune marvell'd; it was strange,
And so the outward and the inward change,
Till to the Power who "gives and takes away"
I turn'd in praise, and taught my soul to pray.

Another came! "I come," he said, "to show,
"Your unknown Friend—have you a wish to know?"
Much I desired, and forth we rode, and found
My Uncle dying, but his judgment sound.
The good old man, whom I abused, had been
The guardian power, directing but unseen;
And thus the wild but grateful boy he led
To take new motives at his dying bed.

The rest you judge—I now have all I need—
And now the tale you promised!—Come, proceed.

P.—'T is due, I own, but yet in mercy spare:
Alas! no Uncle was my guide—my care
Was all my own; no guardian took a share.
I, like Columbus, for a world unknown—
'T was no great effort—sacrificed my own—
My own sad world, where I had never seen
The earth productive, or the sky serene.

But this is past—and I at length am come
To see what changes have been wrought at home;
Happy in this, that I can set me down
At worst a stranger in my native town.

F.—Then be it so! but mean you not to show
How time has pass'd? for we expect to know:
And if you tell not, know you we shall trace
Your movements for ourselves from place to place.
Your wants, your wishes, all you've sought or seen,
Shall be the food for our remark and spleen.
So, warn'd in time, the real page unfold,
And let the Truth, before the Lie, be told.

P.—This might be done; but wonders I have none,
All my adventures are of Self alone.

F.—What then? I grant you, if your way was clear,
All smooth and right—we've no desire to hear;
But if you've lewd and wicked things to tell,
Low passions, cruel deeds, nay crimes—'tis well:
Who would not listen? ———
P.—Hark! I hear the bell.
It calls to dinner with inviting sound,
For now we know where dinners may be found,
And can behold and share the glad repast,
Without a dread that we behold our last.

F.—Come then, shy friend, let doleful subjects cease,
And thank our God that we can dine in peace.

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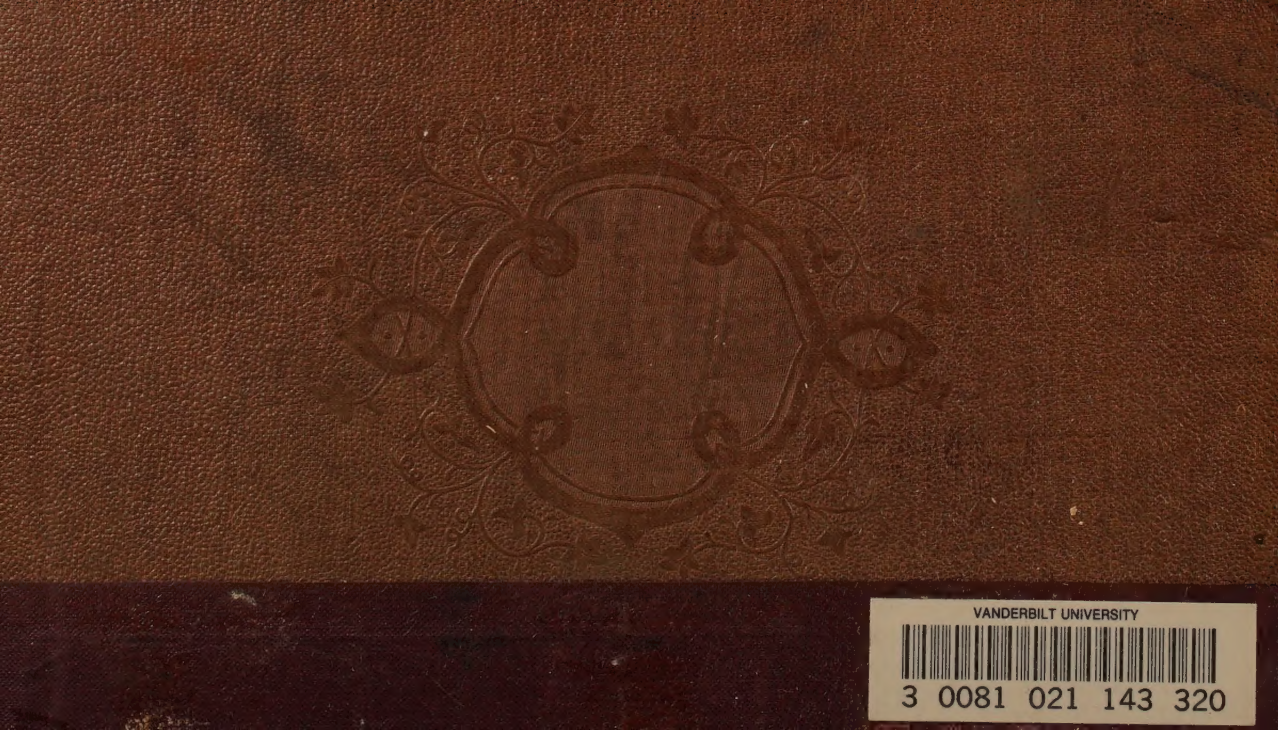
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